NATION
COP29: India insists on fair finance
>> Page: 4 <<

BUSINESS
Swiggy shares surge nearly 8% in market debut
>> Page: 7 <<

SPORTS
Gambhir is a prickly character: Ponting
>> Page: 8 <<

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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'BJP offered ₹50cr to MLAs to topple govt'

MYSURU, 13 NOV

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah alleged that BJP offered Rs 50 crore each to 50 Congress MLAs to topple his government. He said none of the MLAs agreed due to which BJP is now resorting to filing false cases against him. "Did BS Yediyurappa, Basavaraj Bommai, R Ashoka, BY Vijayendra print the money?" he asked after inaugurating projects worth Rs 470 crore in Mysuru.

State gets panel for quota among STs

State has set up a single-member commission led by retired judge Justice HN Nagamohan Das, to examine internal reservations within government jobs for Scheduled Tribes.

>>>More on Page 2

SC guidelines put brakes on bulldozer justice

No demolition should be done without 15 days' prior notice

The bench said high-handed and arbitrary actions such as bulldozer justice have no place in the Constitution ***PHOTO: PTI***

GUIDELINES FOR DEMOLITION

- Only unauthorised structures to be demolished
- No demolitions without advance notice of 15 days to the owner
- The notice must specify the reason for demolition and must be displayed on property
- The order will not be implemented for 15 days from the date of receipt to allow the owner to remove unauthorised construction
- The date for a personal hearing must be given, and the hearing must record the submissions of the owner
- It must also determine whether the offence is compoundable or if partial demolition is possible
- An auto-generated email must be sent to the Collector/District Magistrate as soon as the notice is issued
- A spot report must be prepared, and a detailed video recording of the demolition must be made
- If demolition is found to be in violation of its orders, officers will pay for the property at personal cost

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Equating 'bulldozer justice' with a lawless state of affairs where might is right, Supreme Court on Wednesday laid down pan-India guidelines and said no property should be demolished without a prior show-cause notice and the affected must be given 15 days to respond.

The executive cannot assume judicial powers to punish citizens by demolishing their properties without following due process, it said while terming such excesses "high-handed and arbitrary" and ruling that they need to be dealt with the "heavy hand of the law".

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan described as "chilling" the sight of a bulldozer demol-ishing a building, rendering women, children and aged people homeless overnight.

"If the executive acts as a judge and inflicts penalty of demolition on a citizen on the ground that he is an accused, it violates the principle of 'separation of powers'," the bench said.

The bench said such high-handed and arbitrary actions have no place in the Constitution, which rests on the foundation of the rule of law. Passing a slew of directions, the bench made clear that they will not be applicable if there is an unau-thorised structure in a public place such as road, street, footpath, abutting railway line or any river or water bodies and also in cases where there is an order for demolition made by a court of law.

Even after orders of demolition are passed, the bench said, the affected party needs to be given some time so as to challenge the order before an appropriate forum. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

RESULT ON 23 NOV

81% vote in Sandur, Channapatna, Shiggoan bypolls

BENGALURU, 13 NOV

An estimated 81.84 per cent voters turned out till 10 pm in three Assembly segments of Karnataka where bypolls were held on Wednesday, election officials said.

More than 7 lakh voters were eligible to cast their votes in about 770 polling stations in Shiggaon, Sandur and Channapatna, where a total of 45 candidates were in the fray.

Bypolls for Sandur, Shiggaon, and Channapatna were necessitated, as the seats fell vacant following the election of their respective representatives— E Tukaram of Congress, former chief minister Basavaraj Bommai of BJP, and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy of JD(S) — to Lok Sabha in the May elections.

Channapatna has the highest number of 31 candidates in the fray, while Sandur and Shiggaon have six and eight contenders, respectively.

Channapatna is considered to be a 'high profile', where the contest is between CP Yogeeshwara, a five-time MLA and former minister, who joined Congress quitting BJP recently, and actor-turned-politician Nikhil Kumaraswamy, who is Kumaraswamy's son.

Yogeeshwara, after casting his vote, said there was a "good atmosphere" and he felt that the people of Channapatna were with the Congress.

Nikhil said he would work for the welfare of the people of the segment. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

VOTER TURNOUT

CHANNAPATNA
88.81%

SHIGGAON 80.4% | **SANDUR** 76.2%

Musk, Vivek to lead DOGE to clean up US bureaucracy

WASHINGTON, 13 NOV

US President-elect Donald Trump announced on Wednesday that Tesla owner Elon Musk and Indian American entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy will lead the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, aimed at improving governance and curbing wasteful expenditures. Meanwhile, Trump on Wednesday met President Joe Biden in the Oval Office of the White House to ensure a smooth transition of power, a hallmark of American democracy which took a break four years ago. In a brief meeting, the two leaders assured the nation of a peaceful transition of power on 20 January, 2025.*—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

Delhi's air worst in India, hits 'severe' for 1st time this year

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Delhi recorded the country's worst air quality on Wednesday as it turned 'severe' for the first time this season, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) soaring to 418.

Bihar's Hajipur, with an AQI of 417, had the second-worst reading in the country, Central Pollution Con-trol Board (CPCB) data showed.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', 401 and 450 'severe' and above 450 'severe plus'. According to the CPCB data, the city's AQI was in the 'severe' category for three days in January. Low visibility conditions impacted operations at the Delhi airport, leading to 10 flights being diverted and many getting delayed, officials said.

An anti-smog gun being used to spray water droplets to curb air pollution amid smog in New Delhi on Wednesday ***PHOTO: PTI***

India Meteorological Department reported that very dense fog began forming around 5.30am. Meanwhile, the air quality in Chandigarh remained in the 'very poor' category with the experts sug-gesting people curtail outdoor activity. *—PTI*

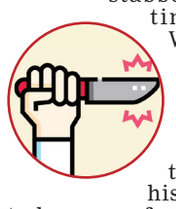
>>>More on Page 4

PHOTO: X

PATIENT'S SON STABS DOCTOR 7 TIMES IN CHENNAI

CHENNAI, 13 NOV

A medical oncologist at the Kalaignar Centenary Super Speciality Hospital here was stabbed seven times on Wednesday by the son of a patient allegedly over grievances on treatment to his mother at t h esame facility, a hospital official said.



The man assaulted the doctor inside the Outpatient room during a conversation on treatment to his mother and he was apprehended immediately by staff and handed over to police who are questioning him.

The doctor is being treated and he is stable, the official said.

Government doctors, strongly condemning the attack, announced a strike, and Health Minister Ma Subramanian is said to hold talks with them. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Jharkhand sees 66% voter turnout

RANCHI, 13 NOV

The first phase of Jharkhand's Assembly elections, which kickstarted on Wednesday, recorded 66.18 per cent voter turnout across the 43 assembly constituencies, surpassing 63.9 per cent voting in the 2019 Assembly elections, said the Election Commission. Meanwhile, Jharkhand's Chief Electoral Officer K Ravi Kumar said on Wednesday that Congress released its manifesto for the Assembly polls in violation of the model code of conduct, and a report regarding this has been submitted to EC. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Centre rushes 20 CAPF companies to Manipur

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

The Centre rushed 20 additional Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) companies comprising about 2,000 personnel to Manipur in the wake of fresh attacks, sources said on Wednesday.

The sources told PTI that Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) issued orders on Tuesday for airlifting and im-mediate deployment of these units.

At least 10 suspected militants were killed in a fierce gunfight with Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on Monday after insurgents in camouflage uniforms, armed with sophisticated weapons, fired at the Borobekra police station and the adjacent CRPF camp at Jakuradhor in Jiribam.

A huge cache of weapons were also seized by the force.

Sources said out of the 20 fresh CAPFs companies, 15 are from CRPF and five from the Border Security Force (BSF).

These units will add to the 198 companies of the CAPFs that are already stationed in the state following the ethnic violence that began in the state in May last year leading to the killing of 200 people. All these CAPF units will be at the disposal of the Manipur government till 30 November.*—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Stand on your own feet, don't use Sharad: SC to Ajit

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

The Supreme Court on Wednesday advised the Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar-led NCP faction to "try standing on its own legs", and asked it not to use pictures of Sharad Pawar in poll cam-paigns, considering the party had "ideological differences" with the NCP supremo.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan asked both factions of Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) led by Sharad Pawar and his nephew Ajit Pawar to focus on the battlefield (Maharashtra assembly elec-tions) instead of doing rounds of the courts.

It asked the Ajit faction to circulate an online circular among its leaders, party workers and representa-tives associated with the assembly elections that they will not use the picture or video/audio clip of Sharad Pawar, whether it is old or new. Polling for 288 assembly seats in Maharashtra will be held on 20 November and the counting of votes will take place on 23 November.

Sharad had founded the NCP with former Lok Sabha speaker Purno Sangma and Tariq Anwar in 1999 after their expulsion from Congress. Ajit had walked away with a majority of the NCP MLAs in 2023, and supported BJP-Shiv Sena government. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Adani to invest $10B in US projects

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Billionaire Gautam Adani on Wednesday committed to investing USD 10 billion in energy and infrastruc-ture projects in the United States.

"Congratulations to @real-DonaldTrump," he posted on X, congratulating the incoming US President.

"As the partnership between India and the United States deepens, the Adani Group is committed to lev-eraging its global expertise and invest $10 billion in US energy security and resilient infrastructure pro-jects, aiming to create up to 15,000 jobs." He, however, did not give the time period or details of the projects that his ports-to-energy conglomerate will be pursuing in the US. Earlier in the day, four diplomats - the ambassadors from the European Union, Germany, Denmark and Belgium – visited the Adani Group's renewable energy installations and were hosted by Gautam Adani, Chairman of the Adani Group. They visited the world's largest renewable energy park in Khavda, Gujarat, and India's largest port, logis-tics and industrial hub in Mundra – both being the core of Adani Group's plan to achieve a renewable energy capacity of 45 GW by 2030. *—PTI*

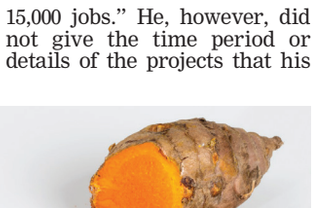


PHOTO: X/@GAUTAM_ADANI

HIGH LEAD LEVELS FOUND IN TURMERIC SOLD IN INDIA

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Dangerously high levels of lead was found in turmeric sold in India, Nepal and Pakistan with some samples far exceeding safe limits, according to a study.

Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) allows up to 10mg of lead per gram (µg/g) in turmeric. Lead levels were found surpassing 1,000 µg/g in some samples, with 14% of tested turmeric exceeding 2 µg/g, according to the study published in Science of The Total Environment journal. Turmeric from seven cities exceeded the FSSAI limit of 10 µg/g. Patna recorded the highest concentration at 2,274 µg/g, followed by Guwahati at 127 µg/g. Other affected cities included Chennai, Kathmandu. The study noted that polished turmeric roots and loose turmeric powder were the most contaminated, while packaged brands showed lower lead levels. *—PTI*

Samantha Harvey poses with the trophy after winning the Booker Prize award 2024, in London ***PHOTO: PTI***

BIGGEST SELLER IN UK

Britain's Samantha wins Booker Prize for 'Orbital'

LONDON, 13 NOV

British author Samantha Harvey has won the 2024 Booker Prize for her ambitious and beautiful novel 'Orbital', the first story set in space to win the 50,000-pound literary prize selected from a historic shortlist that was dominated by women this year.

'Orbital', the biggest-selling book on the shortlist in the UK, takes place over a single day in the life of six astronauts and cosmonauts aboard the International Space Station who observe 16 sunrises and sunsets on Earth spinning past continents and cycling past seasons.

It was named the winner at a ceremony at Old Billingsgate in the City of London on Tuesday evening after the judges described it as a compact yet beautifully expansive novel which invites readers to ob-serve Earth's splendour whilst reflecting on the individual and collective value of every human life.

"I originally thought, 'Why on earth would anybody want to hear from a woman at her desk in Wiltshire writing about space, imagining what it's like being in space when people have actually been there'," said Harvey, who dedicated her award to everybody who "speaks for and not against the Earth". "I thought of it as space pastoral – a kind of nature writing about the beauty of space," said the nearly 50-year-old author. She is the first British writer since 2020 to win the prestigious Booker. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Namma Metro launches luggage storing units

BENGALURU, 13 NOV

Namma Metro has launched cloakrooms at select Metro stations in City, including Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Metro Station, Majestic. 'Safe Cloaks' smart luggage locker facility aims to assist travellers with the secure storage of their bags, solving the long-standing challenge of where to keep extra luggage at Metro stations. The newly installed digital lockers, painted in a distinctive blue and styled like compact booths, allow passengers to store their luggage for a specific duration. The pricing is straightforward: storing a medium-sized bag for up to 6 hours costs Rs 70, while larger luggage can be stored for Rs 100 for the same time. This facility also aims to help travellers who wish to explore the City luggage-free or for commuters on the move, enabling them to travel swiftly. —*Salar News*

PHOTO: ISRO X

Mexican envoy seeks expansion of ISRO-AEM tie-up

BENGALURU, 13 NOV

Ambassador of Mexico to India, Federico Salas, has evinced interest in broadening the collaboration between ISRO and Mexican space agency AEM to include Latin American and Caribbean Space Agency (ALCE). During a meeting at ISRO headquarters in Bengaluru, ISRO Chairperson S Somanath welcomed the Ambassador's proposal and suggested additional avenues for collaboration, including India's potential support in building Earth observation satellites for Mexico. According to a statement from ISRO, Salas conveyed his gratitude for India's support in space technology applications, especially in areas such as forest fire monitoring and agricultural drought management. He emphasised the importance of exploring further opportunities in space cooperation as India and Mexico approach the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic relations in 2025. Somanath highlighted the successful initiatives undertaken between ISRO and Mexican Space Agency, such as the development of a mobile application for forest fire monitoring using satellite data and a workshop conducted by ISRO in 2024 on the use of space systems for forest fire management. —*PTI*

CII Mysuru to host meet on AI & Deep Tech on 29 Nov

MYSURU, 13 NOV

The annual conference of Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Mysuru unit on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deep technologies will be held in city on 29 November. Organised by IT & ITES Panel of CII Mysuru, this conference "for a smarter tomorrow" will throw light on rapid advancements in AI and Deep Tech that are reshaping global industries and driving innovation at an unprecedented pace. The conference will delve into how these technologies can be leveraged to solve complex challenges, optimise operations, and lay the groundwork for sustainable, intelligent business practices. Eswara Rao, Chairman, CII Mysuru Zone, said AI and Deep Tech are no longer just tools but essential drivers for transforming business models and operational strategies. The conference will serve as a premier platform for industry professionals, government representatives, technopreneurs and academia to come together, share insights, and explore pathways to harness these technologies effectively, he said. —*Salar News*

KARNATAKA BYELECTIONS

Voters queue up at a polling booth at Chakkere village in Channapatna Assembly constituency on Wednesday; Sandur Congress candidate Annapurna with her husband, E Tukaram, after casting vote; Basavaraj S Bommai, MP, and his son & BJP candidate Bharat Bommai at a polling booth at Shiggaon

PHOTOS: X/ceo_karnataka, SALAR NEWS

No proposal to lift night traffic ban in Bandipur: CM

CM asks PM to speak on 'Covid scam' in BJP's rule

MYSURU, 13 NOV

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said there is no proposal before his government regarding lifting the night traffic ban passing through Bandipur reserve forest and it was not even taken up for discussion in any meeting.

About Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar saying the traffic ban will be lifted, the Chief Minister said he had no information on what context the former had said this.

Speak on 'graft' in Covid management in BJP rule: CM to PM

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to speak on the alleged corruption in Covid-19 management when BJP was in power in Karnataka.

He charged the Prime Minister with lying when asked about his allegation that the Congress government in Karnataka had raised Rs 700 crore from liquor vendors to fund Maharashtra Assembly elections.

Siddaramaiah PHOTO: ANI

Siddaramaiah said a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kit that costs Rs 330 per piece was purchased for over Rs 2,100 per piece by the then BJP government in the State.

Re-inducting Nagendra

On re-inducting Ballari Rural Congress MLA B Nagendra into the Cabinet, Siddaramaiah said the legislator had spoken to him in this regard on Tuesday. The Chief Minister said he had told Nagendra that he would consider it once the byelections to three Assembly segments in Karnataka are over.

Reservation for Muslims

Referring to BJPs leaders' allegations of giving four cent reservation for Muslims in allotment of civil contract works in the State, the Chief Minister said some Muslim community leaders approached him on this, but the government has not yet decided anything on this.

Upliftment of women

Emphasising State government is committed to the empowerment of women, Siddaramaiah said that his government implemented the five poll guarantee schemes for the empowerment of women. As education is necessary for women to come to the mainstream of society, he wanted women, particularly AHINDA, (Other Backward Classes, Minorities and Dalits) to develop scientific temperament and be aware of their rights and responsibilities.

—*Salar News with Agencies*

CONG COMPLAINT

Activist Snehamayi booked over 'false info' against CM

MYSURU, 13 NOV

Social activist Snehamayi Krishna has been Devaraja booked by police based on a complaint filed by a Congress leader who alleged that he had spread false information against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to create fear among people.

The case was registered on Tuesday night on the complaint by Congress Karnataka unit spokesperson Lakshman M, who alleged that Krishna made false statements with regard to the MUDA 'scam' case against the Chief Minister in his Facebook post in order to defame him, police said.

The Chief Minister, who has been named as accused number 1 in the FIR lodged by the Lokayukta police, is facing allegations of illegalities in the allotment of 14 sites to his wife Parvathi B M by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

Snehamayi Krishna ***PHOTO: PTI***

Siddaramaiah, his wife, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy and Devaraju and others have been named in the FIR registered by Lokayukta police on 27 September.

In his social media post on 10 November, Krishna alleged that the Tehsildar had paid the registration fees while registering the sale deed in favour of Parvathi.

—*Salar News with Agencies*

VALMIKI SCAM

HC nixes Union Bank's plea for CBI probe

BENGALURU, 13 NOV

Karnataka High Court on Wednesday dismissed a petition by Union Bank of India seeking transfer of the investigation of the alleged scam involving Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd to CBI.

The petition was heard by Justice M Nagaprasanna, who ruled that Section 35A of Banking Regulation Act could not be used as grounds for such a transfer. He noted that allowing this could lead to an overreach by banking institutions, potentially undermining Delhi Special Police Establishment Act.

The case, reserved for judgment on 30 September, focused on two main questions: whether the petition should be referred to Supreme Court under Article 131 of Constitution, and if Section 35A of Banking Regulation Act justified seeking a CBI investigation without invoking DSP Act.

The Karnataka government, represented by senior advocate BV Acharya, argued against allowing the petition, stating that State police have the statutory authority to investigate the case, and this authority should not be overridden by the Central government. Senior Advocate Professor Ravivarma Kumar, representing the State-run Corporation, supported the state's stance.

- The petition was heard by Justice M Nagaprasanna, who ruled that Section 35A of Banking Regulation Act could not be used as grounds for such a transfer

The illegal money transfer scam came to the fore, after its accounts superintendent, Chandrasekharan P, died by suicide on 26 May. —*PTI*

Why is CM lying on quota for Muslims?, asks BJP spokesperson

CHENNAI, 13 NOV

BJP National Spokesperson CR Kesavan has said media reports exposed that State government was proposing 4 per cent Muslim reservation and asked why Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was lying. "The Congress government in State has become a dangerous black hole for regressive religious polarisation. Media has exposed communal agenda of Congress," Kesavan said.

Deputy CM Shivakumar spoke about scrapping Shakti Free Bus Scheme for women. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should think about this "Anyay Patra" for women of Karnataka and "Nyay Patra" for Muslim reservation, Kesavan said.

"Media reports showed that on 24 August, there was a representation by MLCs and MLAs, including a political secretary of Chief Minister, to give reservation to Muslims under category 2B of the OBC in government contracts. There is seal and signature by the CM on 31 August. This contradicts their position. Also, Waqf board is running amok and trying to grab farmers' land in unjust manner," he added.

"Rahul Gandhi should answer is it being done at his behest or what does he think about the Muslim reservation and public contracts being planned to be given to Muslims?" he added.

Chief Minister's Office on Tuesday responded to media reports claiming that the State government was considering a proposal for Muslim reservation in jobs, calling the reports "another new lie".

CR Kesavan ***PHOTO: PTI***

—*ANI*

30 students fall sick after eating school breakfast

BIDAR, 13 NOV

About 30 students of a private residential school fell sick after eating breakfast on Wednesday in the taluk headquarters town of Humnabad in Bidar district, police said. It is suspected to be a case of food poisoning, they said.

"The students started vomiting after eating the rice item for breakfast. They also complained of dizziness and fatigue," a police official said.

"They were taken to a hospital." The condition of all the students -- aged between 12 and 14 -- is stable, the official said.

—*PTI*

PUCL condemns rape of mentally challenged woman

MYSURU, 13 NOV

People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) of Mysuru has condemned the alleged rape of a mentally challenged woman with a speech impairment in Mysuru on 8 November.

The incident involved a suspected serial offender and follows another recent alleged assault in the city. Just two weeks earlier, a female employee of a private firm was reportedly attacked by two men in Vijayanagar.

PUCL President Kamal Gopinath and General Secretary V Purushottam demanded swift justice and called upon State government to address rising crimes against women in Mysuru.

In the attack on the 26-year-old woman from Koorgalli, Vijayanagar police allegedly delayed taking action despite pleas from the victim's family. They registered First Information Report only on Monday after pressure from PUCL and Samatha Vedike.

According to a statement from victim's mother, Githa (name changed) left for work on Friday morning, locking her daughter inside their home for safety. By afternoon neighbours summoned her back after finding her daughter injured and bloodied. The assailant (Harish) was apprehended by neighbours. —*Salar News*

PRIVATE COMPANIES

Centre directs State to cancel licences for breast milk commercialisation

BENGALURU, 13 NOV

Union government on Wednesday informed Karnataka High Court that it had directed State government to revoke licences granted to private companies allowing them to collect, process and commercialise human breast milk.

The High Court was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by a person named Munegowda, who raised concerns about multinational corporations profiting from the collection and sale of breast milk.

Additional Solicitor General of India for High Court of Karnataka Arvind Kamath told a bench of Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind that Union Ministry of Ayush had recently instructed Karnataka government to take action against such licences. Following these directions, several licences issued to private firms were rescinded by State government.

PHOTO: FREEPIX

- High Court was hearing a PIL filed by a person named Munegowda, who raised concerns about multinational corporations profiting from the collection and sale of breast milk.

Kamath stated: "Some companies had initially received these licences under Ayurvedic norms, which permitted the commercial use of human breast milk. However, the Centre has now intervened, and the State has complied by cancelling some of these licenses. At least one company has already had its licence revoked, and it has since challenged this cancellation in the High Court."

Advocate B Visveswaraiah, representing the petitioner, presented a 50 ML bottle of packaged breast milk and a 10-gram packet of powdered breast milk, highlighting their sale prices of Rs 1,239 and Rs 313, respectively. The High Court directed the petitioner to implead the Union Ministry in the case. —*PTI*

Bengaluru Tech Summit to be held from 19 to 21 Nov

BENGALURU, 13 NOV

PHOTO: X

Department of Electronics, IT, BT of Karnataka is organising -- Venture Capital Connect -- a three-day programme connecting startups and investors as a part of Bengaluru Tech Summit 2024 from 19 to 21 November, officials said on Wednesday.

The programme is expected to draw over 50 leading global investors, including family offices, angel investors, and venture capital firms from across the globe, bringing a combined potential investment fund of more than USD 17.5 billion, they said.

According to officials, more than 322 startups of diverse ranges have registered to participate in the programme, of which 118 have applied for patents. This includes 23 ideation-stage startups, 142 early traction-stage startups, 75 concept validation stage startups and 82 growth-stage startups.

These startups will have the opportunity to showcase their innovations to an audience of top investors and receive valuable insights and mentorship on scaling their businesses. Investors attending will gain unique access to a robust pipeline of innovative, high-growth startups, across various technology sectors.

"With BTS 2024, we are creating a direct bridge between our startups and global investors," IT Minister Priyank Kharge said. —*PTI*

Despite boycott calls, Jharkhand turnout is 66.18%

In Phase 1, polls were held in 43 Assembly seats in Jharkhand

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Unfazed by threats and boycott calls from Maoists, people in Jharkhand turned out in impressive numbers to vote on Wednesday even as the overall polling percentage in the state surpassed the 63.9 per cent recorded in the 2019 assembly elections, according to the Election Commission.

Voting was held in 43 assembly seats out of 81 in the first phase and the rest of the seats will go to polls on 20 November.

"Polling was marked by a festive mood and enthusiastic participation across all districts, with large tribal population, including areas affected by Left wing extremism," the poll authority said on Wednesday evening.

"In Budha Pahad area in Garhwa district, once considered a stronghold of extremists, long queues, and peaceful polling at Hesatu polling station signalled the deep penetration of democratic ethos.

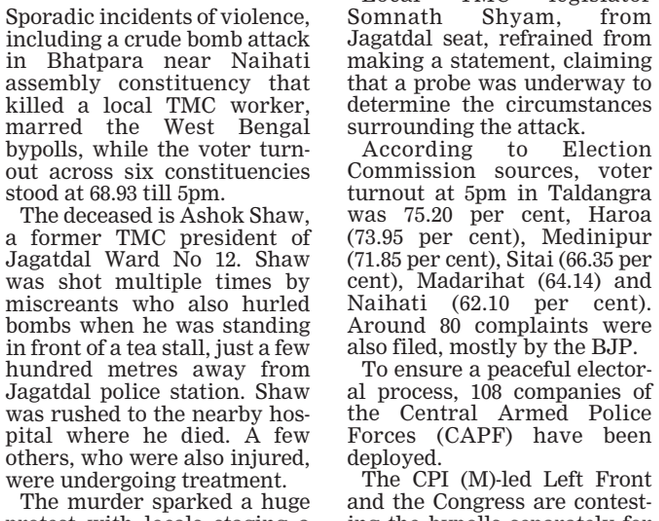
"For the first time, this polling station was set up in the Budha Pahad area for the Lok Sabha elections 2024, allowing residents to vote in their own village," EC authorities said.

The social media handles of EC were active throughout the day, highlighting voter participation.

CEC Rajiv Kumar along with ECs Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu constantly monitored the situation across over 15,000 polling stations. *—PTI*

JHARKHAND POLLS

- Candidates: 683
- Men: 609
- Women: 73
- Seats: 43
- Districts: 15



Voters queue up outside a polling station in Jharkhand **PHOTO: PTI**

People got JMM scheme funds just before vote: BJP

RANCHI, 13 NOV

Jharkhand BJP on Wednesday lodged a complaint with the Election Commission against the Hemant Soren-led government for allegedly transferring money into the accounts of women beneficiaries under Jharkhand Mukhyamantri Maiyan Samman Yojana (JMMSY) a night before polling.

The party also lodged a complaint against Ajay Nath Shahdeo, Congress candidate from Hatia and Mahua Maji, the JMM candidate from the Ranchi, for allegedly violating the model code of conduct.

Delegates, including Pushpak Tiwary, said they demanded a probe and action from the commission against the government for "transferring" the amount under Maiya Samman Yojana on the night of 12 November. "We informed the commission that the amount is transferred on the sixth or seventh of every month to the accounts of the beneficiaries. But the same was transferred a night before the polling," they said.

They alleged that Hatia Congress candidate was distributing voter slips with his photo. *—PTI*

BJP spent crores on 95,000 Whatsapp groups to malign JMM: Hemant Soren

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Wednesday accused the BJP of maligning his and the state's image through "shadow campaigns", an allegation that the saffron camp dismissed. Soren alleged that the saffron camp has been "spending crores on social media platforms" and "created 95,000 Whatsapp groups" to campaign against the JMM-led coalition.Despite filing a complaint with the Election Commission, no action was taken, he claimed.He also attacked BJP's "infiltration narrative", claiming that "Jharkhand is hundreds of kilometres away from the Bangladesh border - but the neighbouring country seems to be close to the BJP's heart".

JHARKHAND VOTERS

Clockwise from top left: Cricketer MS Dhoni, former Jharkhand CM Champai Soren; Independent and only transgender candidate in phase 1 polls Nagma Rani, Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren and wife Kalpana **PHOTOS: PTI**

> **BJP is getting more than two-thirds of majority in the first phase of voting... Jharkhand will defeat the corrupt... alliance of JMM, Congress and RJD, which has supported the Bangladeshi infiltrators**
>
> -Shivraj Singh Chouhan, BJP's assembly polls Jharkhand in-charge

> **The people of Jharkhand have to vote for social justice for all, inclusive development and good governance as well as for the protection of 'jal, jungle, zameen (water, forests, land) and tribal civilisation**
>
> -Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition

> **Sonia ji tried to land the plane named Rahul Baba 20 times and 20 times the plane crashed. Now again, an attempt is being made to land the plane for the 21st time in Maharashtra**
>
> -Amit Shah, Union Home Minister

POLL VIOLENCE

TMC worker killed near Naihati; WB sees 68.93% turnout

KOLKATA, 13 NOV

Sporadic incidents of violence, including a crude bomb attack in Bhatpara near Naihati assembly constituency that killed a local TMC worker, marred the West Bengal bypolls, while the voter turnout across six constituencies stood at 68.93 till 5pm.

The deceased is Ashok Shaw, a former TMC president of Jagatdal Ward No 12. Shaw was shot multiple times by miscreants who also hurled bombs when he was standing in front of a tea stall, just a few hundred metres away from Jagatdal police station. Shaw was rushed to the nearby hospital where he died. A few others, who were also injured, were undergoing treatment.

The murder sparked a huge protest with locals staging a demonstration outside the police station prompting the Chief Electoral Officer's (CEO) office to seek a report on the incident.

The incident drew immediate political reactions, with BJP leader Arjun Singh accusing the TMC of using intimidation tactics to instil fear among voters in Naihati and other constituencies.

Local TMC legislator Somnath Shyam, from Jagatdal seat, refrained from making a statement, claiming that a probe was underway to determine the circumstances surrounding the attack.

According to Election Commission sources, voter turnout at 5pm in Taldangra was 75.20 per cent, Haroa (73.95 per cent), Medinipur (71.85 per cent), Sitai (66.35 per cent), Madarihat (64.14) and Naihati (62.10 per cent). Around 80 complaints were also filed, mostly by the BJP.

To ensure a peaceful electoral process, 108 companies of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) have been deployed.

The CPI (M)-led Left Front and the Congress are contesting the bypolls separately for the first time since 2021, following a recent change in the Bengal Congress leadership. The Left Front has announced candidates for five of the six seats, including one CPI(ML) nominee. The Congress has fielded candidates in all six assembly segments. Votes will be counted on 23 November. *—PTI*

R'than Ind candidate slaps election official

An Independent candidate for Deoli-Uniara Assembly bypoll allegedly slapped a Sub-Divisional Officer on election duty. Residents of Samravta village boycotted the bypoll as they wanted inclusion in another tehsil. Naresh Meena, Congress rebel-turned-Independent backed the villagers but when area magistrate went to convince the people to vote, he was slapped. —PTI

5 pose as poll officers, dupe trader of Rs 25L

Five men allegedly cheated a businessman of over Rs 25 lakh in Maharashtra's Kolhapur by posing as vigilance officers and citing violation of the election code of conduct for carrying cash.The accused took the trader in a car after taking his bag and mobile phone. The businessman insisted on going to the police station. When they didn't oblige, he realised they were imposters. —PTI

Landslide-hit Wayanad sees emotional scenes

Congress candidate Priyanka Gandhi Vadra during Wayanad Lok Sabha bypoll on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

WAYANAD, 13 NOV

Emotional scenes were witnessed at the polling stations set up for the survivors of the landslides, which hit the hill district this July, killing 200. While voting in the bypoll for Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency, they saw their neighbours and friends after a long time since the disaster. The survivors hugged each other and broke into tears.

One elderly man broke down as he narrated how the residents of Punchirimattam, Chooralmala and Mundakkai villages, which were completely destroyed, celebrated every festival together irrespective of their religions.

His friend, whom he met on the bus that was arranged to ferry voters, hugged and consoled him. *—PTI*

MP Cong, BJP accuse each other of threatening voters

BHOPAL, 13 NOV

BJP and Congress on Wednesday accused each other of trying to intimidate the voters in the Vijaypur assembly constituency in Sheopur district where polling for a byelection was underway.

The administration stopped state BJP chief VD Sharma at the district border at Basreya near Karahal, while state Congress chief Jitu Patwari was stopped at Kuhajapur when he was entering from Rajasthan.

BJP leaders were roaming freely in Vijaypur and the ruling party's goons were threatening voters, alleged Patwari. Police only stopped and detained Congress leaders at the border of Sheopur district, he claimed.

"Neither the Election Commission nor the Madhya Pradesh administration are intervening. From the collector to police officers, everyone is working as BJP agents," the Congress leader told reporters.

State BJP chief Sharma claimed that Congress workers attacked members of tribal communities. *—PTI*

Infiltration row: ED arrests 3 people

Three people, including two Bangladeshi nationals, have been arrested by the ED during searches connected to a money laundering case related to illegal Bangladeshi infiltration into Jharkhand, official sources said on Wednesday.Rony Mondal and Sameer Chowdhary are nationals of the neighbouring country while Pintu Haldar is an Indian. The three, suspected to be touts, were arrested on Tuesday night from West Bengal in the Bangladeshi Infiltration case for facilitating trafficking.

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray and Mumbai Congress President Varsha Gaikwad at a poll roadshow at Dharavi ahead of Maharashtra Assembly elections on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

'THOSE SAYING HINDUS IN DANGER IGNORE MARATHAS'

CHHATRAPATI/ SAMBHAJI NAGAR, 13 NOV

Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange Patil has said those who claim Hindus are in danger and seek their unity are responsible for denying reservation to Marathas. He claimed voters are ready to hand over a drubbing to the BJP-led ruling coalition in the Maharashtra assembly polls.

In his most explicit attack on the 'Mahayuti' government, he said interest of every section of society has suffered on its watch.

The 42-year-old activist, who has rallied a large section of Marathas in support of his demand for OBC quota for them, told PTI that those who claim to work for Hindu unity have used his community to target Muslims but ignored its genuine demands.

"If you claim Hindus are in danger, then what about Marathas? Can't you see their children's troubles? If you say Hindus are in trouble, then it is also your responsibility to ensure the welfare of Marathas.

"A Hindu opposes us when we demand reservation, but when they have to target Muslims, they need Marathas to run after them with sticks," he said. *—PTI*

FRIENDS IN NEED

Modi lays foundation for AIIMS Darbhanga; pours love on Nitish

DARBHANGA, 13 NOV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday showered accolades on Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, praising the alliance partner for bringing in good governance in a state which was previously reeling under "jungle raj".

Modi made a veiled attack on the Congress-RJD combine—without mentioning it by name—at a function in Darbhanga, a town in north Bihar, where he laid the foundation stone for an AIIMS and inaugurated projects worth more than Rs 12,000 crore.

In the course of his address, which lasted around 40 minutes, the Prime Minister referred to Kumar, whose JD(U) played a crucial role in enabling the NDA's return to power in the Parliamentary elections earlier this year, as "lokpriya mukhyamantri" (popular chief minister).

Modi said, "Nitish babu has set up a model of sushasan (good governance)." He added, "No praise is too high for him (jitni saraahna ki jaae kam hai) for his contribution in pulling Bihar out of the era of jungle raj. Now, under the NDA's double engine government, the state is making rapid, all-round progress."

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar touches Prime Minister Narendra Modi's feet at a rally on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Earlier, Kumar had thanked the Prime Minister for AIIMS, Darbhanga, even as he recalled having first made request for the super specialty hospital in the north Bihar town with late BJP leader Arun Jaitley. *—PTI*

BJP video shows Shinde's bags being checked

MUMBAI, 13 NOV

Parties in Maharashtra continued to add fuel to the ongoing row over the bags of leaders being checked by poll officials.

The Maharashtra BJP on Wednesday posted a video on X showing checking of Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis' bags, and said merely holding the Constitution for "show" is not enough and one must also follow the constitutional system.

Later, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's bags were checked while he was on board a helicopter in Palghar district. A video of the same was posted online. Another video showed CM Shinde's bags also being checked.

In the last two days, Uddhav Thackeray claimed his bags were inspected by the election authorities after he arrived in Latur and Yavatmal districts to campaign for the 20 November assembly elections.

Some leaders have the habit of creating "drama", BJP said in the post, which comes after former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's claims.

Thackeray had also asked if the same law would be applied to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other NDA leaders.

On Wednesday, the state BJP unit posted a footage on its social media handle X, showing Fadnavis' bags being checked by security personnel at Kolhapur airport on 5 November. *—PTI*

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's bags being checked by a poll official **PHOTO: X**

Morphed pictures: AP police summon Ram Gopal Varma

MADDIPADU, 13 NOV

Andhra Pradesh police on Wednesday summoned film director Ram Gopal Varma for questioning in connection with the posting of morphed photographs of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on social media. A Prakasam district police team visited Varma's Jubilee Hills residence in Hyderabad today and served the notice personally to the director around 10 am to appear before the investigation officer at Maddipadu police station on 19 November."We served the notices to (Varma) to appear before the investigation officer...," Prakasam district superintendent of police AR Damodar said. After receiving the notice, Varma informed police that he would attend the questioning, said a police official. Prakasam district police registered the case on November 11. *—PTI*

No casualty as 5.2 earthquake strikes J&K

SRINAGAR, 13 NOV

An earthquake of magnitude 5.2 struck Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday but there were no reports of any loss of life or damage to property, officials said. The quake occurred at 10.43 am with epicentre in the Afghanistan region, they said. The tremors were felt in the Kashmir Valley, causing panic among the people as they rushed outdoors. Meanwhile, a 5.3-magnitude moderate earthquake on Wednesday jolted parts of Pakistan, including the capital Islamabad. Following the tremors, people came out of their houses in fear. However, no casualties have been reported so far. *—PTI*

Digital archive on Nehru will be live by next year

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

With a digital archive dedicated to India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru getting ready by next year, research material will be available at the click of a mouse or on mobile phones, the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund (JNMF) said on Wednesday. The Nehru Archive will go online next year on 14 November, the birth anniversary of the former prime minister, it said. It archive will have 100 volumes of The Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, his letters to chief ministers from 1947 to 1964 and published books by Jawaharlal Nehru such as "Letters from a Father to His Daughter", "Glimpses of World History, An Autobiography", "The Unity of India", "The Discovery of India", "A Bunch of Old Letters" and his lesser-known writings. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Coldplay promises fourth show in Ahmedabad

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Rock band Coldplay and online ticket platform BookMyShow on Wednesday announced a fourth show in Ahmedabad as part of the band's Music Of The Spheres World Tour 2025 citing "incredible fan demand". The British band, led by vocalist Chris Martin, posted on their official X page about the new concert in India. The tickets for the new show will go on sale on 16 November at 12pm. "2025 AHMEDABAD DATE ANNOUNCED...The band will play their biggest ever show, at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on 25 January, 2025. # MusicOf TheSpheresWorldTour," the band posted on X. The multiple Grammy-award winning band will perform for a potential audience of 1,00,000 fans, making it "the biggest stadium show of their career", BookMyShow said on Wednesday. *—PTI*

UP opposition cheers at SC order on demolitions

Leaders say it will end 'bulldozer terror', 'jungle raj'

LUCKNOW, 13 NOV

With the Supreme Court applying brakes on bulldozer action, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) President Mayawati on Wednesday hoped the "terror" of bulldozer will come to an end, even as Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Rai said the verdict would end "jungle raj" in the state.

The Samajwadi Party (SP) also hailed the SC decision and said the "bulldozer action" was "totally unjust, unfair, unconstitutional and illegal". UP cabinet minister Om Prakash Rajbhar also welcomed the court's order.

On the SC's directive for action against officials involved in illegal bulldozer action, Rajbhar said, "The court's orders will be followed. If anyone is found guilty, action will be taken against them."

"After today's decision of the honourable Supreme Court regarding bulldozer demolitions and the related strict guidelines, it should be expected that UP and other state governments will manage public interest and welfare properly and smoothly and the terror of bulldozers will definitely end now," Mayawati posted on X in Hindi.

SC directed action against officials involved in illegal bulldozer action **PHOTO: PTI**

Rai said: "We welcome the apex court's decision. Hopefully this decision will end the jungle raj in Uttar Pradesh."

Ajay Rai **PHOTO: PTI**

The SP took to social media, noting that the apex court has made very strong comments on the bulldozer action. "The bulldozer action is totally unjust, unfair, unconstitutional and illegal... This decision is a tight slap on the face of incompetent, useless, highly corrupt people who run the government...," it posted on X.

Rajbhar, the minister for Panchayati Raj, Minority Welfare, Muslim Waqf and Haj, said, "The government never demolishes any personal property. Bulldozer is run on illegal occupation on public properties. It was the high court's decision. We do not do it on our own."

Asked about the court's scathing observations, he said the houses which have been demolished were not built on private properties but on land belonging to the railways, forest department, etc. *—PTI*

Owning home is everybody's dream: SC

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Supreme Court judge BR Gavai on Wednesday cited a couplet by famous Hindi poet Pradeep in the 95-page verdict laying down pan-India guidelines on the demolition of properties."Apna ghar ho, apna aangan ho, is khawab mein har koi jeeta hai; Insaan ke dil ki ye chahat hai ki ek ghar ka sapna kabhi naa choote' (To have one's own home, one's own courtyard – this dream lives in every heart. It's a longing that never fades, to never lose the dream of a home)," the introduction to the judgement by Supreme Court read. *—PTI*

6 MISSING, 11 DEAD

Security personnel check a vehicle in a sensitive area of Manipur **PHOTO: PTI**

Shutdown affects Imphal valley

IMPHAL, 13 NOV

Normal life was affected in Manipur's Imphal valley on Wednesday because of a total shutdown called by 13 civil rights organisations to protest the alleged abduction of three women and children each by militants in Jiribam district, officials said.

Business establishments and educational institutions in the five Imphal valley districts of Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Kakching and Bishnupur were closed due to the shutdown which commenced at 6 pm on Tuesday.

Both private and inter-district public transportation also remained off the roads and government offices recorded negligible attendance, they said.

The shutdown was called by the International Peace and Social Advancement along with All Clubs Organisations Association and Meira Paibi Lup, Indigeneous People's Association of Kangleipak and Kangleipak Students' Association.

No untoward incident was reported in Imphal valley during the shutdown.

Meanwhile, armed militants allegedly set ablaze two trucks carrying goods near Old Kaiphundai in Naga-dominated Tamenglong district near Jiribam. The suspected hill-based militants stopped the trucks along NH 37 by firing several rounds in the air and then set them on fire, an official said. Rongmei Naga Students Organisation, Manipur strongly condemned the incident and alleged Kuki militants were behind it.

Police said on Monday that 10 armed militants were killed after CRPF post and police station came under attack. *—PTI*

AIR POLLUTION

Delhi BJP seeks closure of schools up to Class 5

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

The BJP on Wednesday demanded the Delhi government order the closure of all schools up to Class 5 in view of the worsening situation of air pollution, as it hit out at the AAP over the issue, claiming the city has become a gas chamber.

The national capital experienced the season's first dense fog on Wednesday, with "very poor" air quality. The air quality index was 366 according to the Central Pollution Control Board's real-time data at 9 am.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said the AAP government in Delhi should shut down all private and government schools up to class five to protect the children from the hazardous air quality.

The Delhi government has "completely failed" to control pollution, Sachdeva said and claimed the particulate matter (PM) 2.5 levels have crossed 400, and PM 10 levels have crossed 1,000.

"Delhi has become a gas chamber where everyone is coughing and complaining of trouble in breathing," he said. *—PTI*

COP29: India insists on fair finance

BAKU, 13 NOV

India, as part of the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) bloc, stood firm in calling for equitable financial support from developed nations at the ongoing COP29 climate negotiations, multiple sources from the grouping said on Wednesday.

Concerns were also raised that nearly 69 per cent of reported finance came in the form of loans adding burdens on the already vulnerable countries.

At the annual climate talks, India negotiates in key groupings such as the LMDCs, G77 and China and BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China), where it aligns with other developing nations to advocate for climate finance, equity and technology transfer.

Muhammad Yunus, head of Bangladesh's interim government, attends the COP29 UN Climate Summit, in Azerbaijan on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

On Tuesday, G77 and China – the largest bloc representing around 130 countries at the UN climate talks — rejected the draft text of a framework for negotiating a new climate finance goal.

The New Collective Quantified Goal is the central issue at this year's climate summit, the 29th Conference of Parties (COP29) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, collectively negotiating and working to keep global emissions under check.

During the negotiations, the LMDCs emphasised the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" to address the pressing financial gaps hindering effective climate action.

In the discussions centred on long-term climate finance, the Like-Minded Developing Countries, alongside the African Group and the Arab Group, questioned the accountability of developed nations in reaching the USD 100 billion annual climate finance goal set years ago, which remains contentious. *—PTI*

Empower villages, says Murmu

SILVASSA, 13 NOV

President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday said India will progress once its villages and panchayats are empowered as nearly 70 to 80 per cent of the people live in the rural parts of the country.

Murmu was addressing a gathering after inaugurating a government school at Zanda Chowk in Silvassa town of the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

"As per our Constitution's preamble, our nation's aim is to provide social, economic and political justice to citizens. I was told that the administration of this Union Territory is taking various steps for the uplift of this region's people and results of those efforts are now visible," she said.

President Droupadi Murmu at Swami Vivekananda Vidya Mandir in Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Murmu said the participation of village panchayats helps in ensuring better governance. "India is a country of villages because nearly 70 to 80 per cent people live in villages. Thus, our country will progress and become stronger if villages and panchayats become stronger," the president said, adding she will visit a 'panchayat ghar' after the event.

Murmu was on a two-day visit to the Union Territory from Tuesday. *—PTI*

BLAME GAME OVER POLLUTION USELESS: MANN

CHANDIGARH, 13 NOV

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Wednesday said there should be no "blame game" over the pollution issue and stressed that its solution should be found in cooperation with other states.

Stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana is often blamed for the rise in air pollution in Delhi after the paddy harvest in October and November.

Mann said, "It is also the problem of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Its solution has to be found by sitting together." He said promoting crop diversification in the state in order to encourage farmers to switch over from paddy to other crops. *—PTI*

Bomb scare: AMU helps to identify suspects

ALIGARH, 13 NOV

Six days after a bomb scare at the Aligarh Junction railway station, despite seeking assistance from the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) to identify the culprits, the police have yet to make any headway in the probe.

Sources said AMU authorities, led by Proctor Mohamad Waseem Ali, have been working alongside the police, using CCTV footage to identify the suspects. He said that despite their efforts, the suspects have not yet been identified.

"We have not yet found anyone matching the descriptions from the footage. However, we are continuing our efforts," he said.

RPF in-charge at Aligarh, Amit Kumar Singh, said their force was coordinating with the local police and AMU.

The investigation began after an auto-rickshaw driver reported to the police that he had driven two young men from near the AMU campus to the railway station. During the ride, the driver said, he overheard the passengers discussing plans to plant a bomb at the station.

The Civil Lines police promptly informed the RPF. *—PTI*

Restoration work underway after a goods train carrying iron ore derailed in Peddapalli district of Telangana on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

GOODS TRAIN DERAILS IN TELANGANA

HYDERABAD, 13 NOV

A goods train derailed in the Peddapalli district of Telangana, leading to the cancellation of 39 passenger trains and 61 being diverted, officials of South Central Railway (SCR) said on Wednesday.

Twelve wagons of the good strain carrying steel coils and iron rods derailed between Raghavapuram and Ramagundam on Tuesday night, said SCR Chief Public Relations Officer A Sridhar. No one was injured in the incident, he said.

The train was proceeding from Ballari in Karnataka towards Ghaziabad. It was a triple-line section and all the three tracks suffered damages, Sridhar said, adding that restoration works were underway and a temporary approach road was also being laid for deploying large cranes to the site, he said. The SCR official said one line was expected to be declared fit for resuming train movement by Wednesday evening, and train movement on the remaining two lines was likely to start by Thursday. *—PTI*

STRIKE CALLED

Patient's son stabs doc 7 times in TN

CHENNAI, 13 NOV

A medical oncologist at the Kalaignar Centenary Super Speciality Hospital here was stabbed seven times on Wednesday by the son of a patient allegedly over grievances on treatment to his mother at the same facility, a hospital official said.

The man assaulted the doctor inside the Outpatient room during a conversation on treatment to his mother and he was apprehended immediately by staff and handed over to police who are questioning him. The doctor is being treated and he is stable, the official said.

Government doctors, strongly condemning the attack, announced a strike, and Health Minister Ma Subramanian is said to hold talks with them.

Doctors of Stanley Medical College protest on Wednesday after a doctor in Chennai was stabbed by a patient's son **PHOTO: PTI**

The assailant has been identified as Vignesh, a resident of a suburban neighbourhood. His mother Kanchana was the patient. The victim was Balaji, a renowned oncologist serving as an associate professor in medical oncology department of the government hospital.

"He closed the OP room and stabbed the doctor in his neck, behind his ear, chest, forehead, on his back, head and stomach. There was extensive blood loss. The doctor is a heart patient and he has undergone a surgery," said an emergency medicine anaesthesiologist.

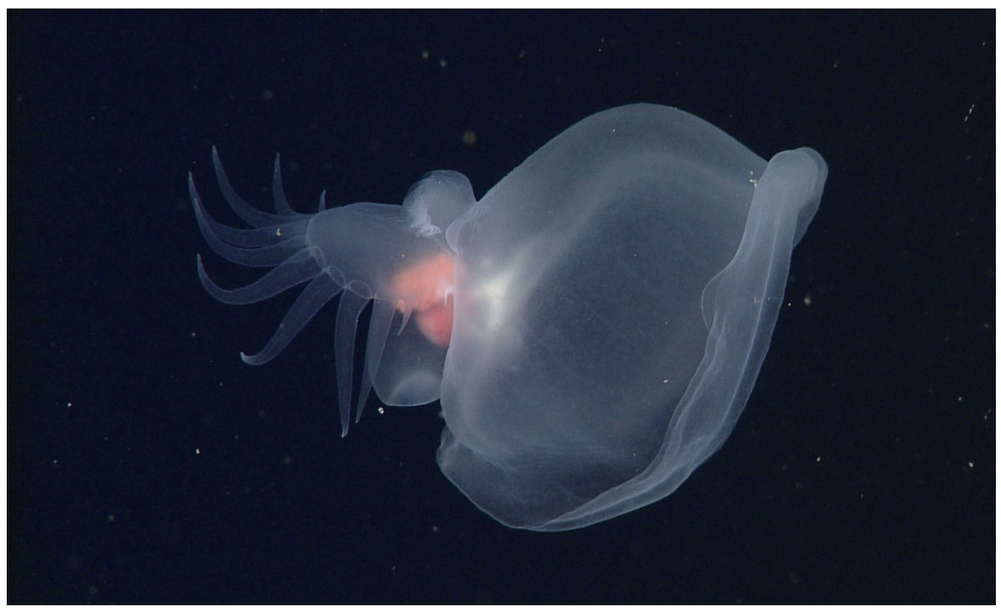
Insisting that he wanted to talk about his mother, Vignesh entered the OP room and shut the door. Later, with the help of security personnel, staff and others, the door was opened and the doctor was rescued.

The injured doctor was resuscitated and immediately operated upon by a multidisciplinary team of surgeons. The victim had lost a large quantity of blood. Two units of blood was transfused and all wounds were sutured. "We have to wait for another six to eight hours for his recovery. He is under anaesthesia. As of now, he is stable and we pray to God that he will come back to normal condition," said the anaesthesiologist. *—PTI*

NEW GLOWING SEA MOLLUSC

Researchers have discovered a new mollusc species of sea slug, Bathydevius caudactylus, in the ocean's midnight zone, an area between 3,300 and 13,100 ft below the surface. Unlike typical sea slugs, which live on the seafloor, this species is a swimming slug that glows with bioluminescence. It has a unique paddle-like tail and a large, gelatinous hood. Bathydevius is the first sea slug known to live in such deep waters, and its adaptations make it unlike any other sea slug discovered before

PHOTO: MBARI



Border row: Fragile peace between India and China

India and China recently pulled back each other's troops from two face-off points on their contested high-altitude border. The move came days after the two nuclear-armed neighbours struck a deal on military patrols that aims to end a four-year standoff that has strained ties.

The agreement was reached shortly before a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in the Russian city of Kazan at the end of October.

After their talks, both Modi and Xi made pledges to improve bilateral relations and praised the recent progress towards solving territorial disputes in the Himalayas.

It signalled a potential thaw between the two Asian giants since border clashes between their troops in 2020, which killed at least 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers.

China and India, the world's two most populous nations, are intense rivals and have accused each other of trying to seize territory along their de facto border, known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Security experts say there is a need to renew efforts to find a permanent solution to the border dispute ***PHOTO: PTI***

Just a 'first step'

Security experts in India welcomed the latest deal to de-escalate tensions, but say there is a need to renew efforts to find a permanent solution to the border dispute.

"Disengagement is the very first step. If and once completed at all points, it will be a confidence-building measure (CBM). De-escalation and de-induction are the next two major phases in this process and formal CBMs can only be decided after that," Jayadeva Ranade, president of the Centre for China Analysis and Strategy in New Delhi, told DW.

"In the absence of trust, peace will be fragile. Beijing has also reiterated its ambitious agenda, which does not calm the apprehensions of the world," he added.

Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, president of Mantraya, an independent research forum, said both New Delhi and Beijing should engage in a serious dialogue to find ways to demarcate their disputed border.

She also pointed to other problems plaguing the bilateral relationship: "The border standoff is just one of several issues India has with China. Beijing needs to be attentive to New Delhi's concerns regarding Pakistan-supported terrorism, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), trade imbalances, and other related matters."

Despite the latest border disengagement deal, D'Souza said there is "a lingering sense of mistrust towards China" in New Delhi. She noted that it will continue to cast a shadow over bilateral ties.

"China's global ambitions and its strategy to increase its influence in India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean will consistently pose challenges for India," the expert said. "Both countries must work towards establishing a mechanism that allows for mutual growth through competition while avoiding conflicts. Until that occurs, achieving peace with China will remain an unfinished project," she added.

Rebuilding trust possible?

Foreign Minister S Jaishankar this week highlighted how the recent troop pullback marks significant progress between the two sides.

Nevertheless, he acknowledged that managing bilateral ties in the long term poses a challenge as it involves establishing an equilibrium in the disputed border areas.

"After the withdrawal of both countries on the LAC, we have to see in which direction we can move forward. We feel that the withdrawal from the LAC is a welcome step. This opens the possibility that other steps can also be taken," Jaishankar said on the sidelines of the India-Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue in Canberra. SK Chatterji, a former army official and defence strategist, said that from a military standpoint, "CBMs must include weekly meetings at the battalion commanders' level, a total ban on carriage of firearms and even sticks at the borders." "The three Ds formula that the Indians have proposed, involving disengagement (currently in progress), de-escalation and finally de-induction of formations brought into the zone from other places, could build trust on both sides," Chatterji, who previously commanded a regiment in the high-altitude region, told DW.

"All told, it is doubtful if the armies on both sides will trust each other for a long time to come. Military-to-military interaction through exercises and visits could accelerate the process of building trust."

How to maintain peace?

While vigilance across the boundary remains a priority as both nations work through friction points and consider establishing buffer zones in crucial areas, transparency is also important in managing public sentiment and reducing nationalistic pressures, say experts.

"What China and India have right now is not peace, it is the lack of hostilities. Troops have disengaged from eyeball-to-eyeball deployments but they remain in the combat zones," Atul Kumar, a China expert and fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, told DW. "Therefore, unless de-escalation and de-induction of troops is complete, both India and China cannot discuss how to maintain peace." Both countries have reached multiple agreements in the past aimed at maintaining peace and stability along their disputed border but they have failed, Kumar said. "Therefore, a pact on paper has minimal value and both states need to find a way to institutionalize the mechanism to restore and maintain peace. What steps would be necessary to achieve that remains unknown but both sides are trying to find ways and methods," he added.

Kumar stressed that the latest border deal presents an opportunity for both sides to de-escalate the tensions.

"The meetings and discussions to further resolve conflictual issues are about to begin. If not a resolution, China and India need to find a practical compromise to coexist together and prevent conflicts from emerging," he said.

—DW News

SALAR ساہر بنگلور

What happens to Trump's criminal cases after his win?

Donald Trump's election victory created a profound conundrum for the judge overseeing his criminal case in New York. Can he go ahead and sentence the president-elect, or would doing so potentially get in the way of Trump's constitutional responsibility to lead the nation?

Court documents made public Tuesday revealed that Judge Juan M Merchan has effectively put the case on hold until at least 19 November while he and the lawyers on both sides weigh in on what should happen next. Trump's sentencing had been tentatively scheduled for 26 November.

Trump's lawyers are urging Merchan to act "in the interests of justice" and rip up the verdict, the first criminal conviction of a former and now future US president.

Manhattan prosecutors told Merchan they want to find a way forward that balances the "competing interests" of the jury's verdict and Trump's responsibilities as president.

Here are some scenarios for what could happen next:

Wait until Trump leaves office

If Merchan wants to preserve the verdict without disrupting Trump's presidency, he could opt to delay sentencing until the president-elect leaves office in 2029.

Trump would be 82 at the end of his second term and more than a decade removed from the events at the heart of the case.

Trump's conviction on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records involves his efforts to hide a $130,000 payment during his 2016 presidential campaign to squelch porn actor Stormy Daniels' claims that she had sex with him years earlier, which he denies.

If he opts to wait, Merchan might not be on the bench by then. His current term ends before Trump is slated to leave office.

Grant Trump's immunity claim

Another way Merchan could get rid of the case is by granting Trump's previous request to overturn the verdict because of a US Supreme Court decision in July that gave presidents broad immunity from criminal prosecution.

The judge had said he would issue a ruling Tuesday, but that was before Trump's election victory upended the schedule.

The high court's ruling gives former presidents immunity from prosecution for official acts and bars prosecutors from using evidence of official acts in trying to prove their personal conduct violated the law.

Trump's lawyers argue prosecutors "tainted" the case with testimony about his first term and other evidence that shouldn't have been allowed. Prosecutors have said the ruling provides "no basis for disturbing the jury's verdict."

The judge could order a new trial — potentially to take place after Trump leaves office — or dismiss the indictment entirely.

Hold off until a federal court rules

Merchan could choose to delay things until the 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals rules on Trump's earlier bid to move the case from state court to federal court.

Trump's lawyers have been appealing a Manhattan federal judge's decision to deny the transfer.

Their argument: Trump's case belongs in federal court because as a former president he has the right to assert immunity and seek dismissal.

Waiting for the appeals court to rule, though, might trigger further delays down the road. The court has given prosecutors until 13 January to respond to Trump's appeal. That's a week before he is to be sworn in to office. Once Trump is in the White House, his legal team could make fresh arguments around presidential immunity.

Case dismissed

Merchan could end the case immediately by overturning Trump's conviction on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records and throwing out the indictment.

That would mean no sentencing or punishment, sparing the president-elect from the possibility of prison time or other penalties.

Trump's lawyers insist tossing the case is the only way "to avoid unconstitutional impediments" to his ability to govern.

Prosecutors acknowledged the "unprecedented circumstances" of Trump's conviction colliding with his election but also said the jury's verdict should stand.

Proceed to sentencing

Merchan could also opt for none of the above and move to sentencing — or at least try, barring an appeal by Trump's lawyers.

George Mason University law professor Ilya Somin said whether the case reaches sentencing "could go either way." If it does, he said, "it probably won't be a prison sentence." Trump's charges carry a range of punishments from a fine or probation to up to four years in prison. "Any prison sentence would likely be blocked or suspended in some way," but a lesser sentence "probably wouldn't impede Trump to any meaningful degree," Somin said.

—PTI

Donal Trump is convicted on 34 felony counts ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Emissions to reach record high this year, India's share rises by 4.6%

Global fossil emissions to reach record high in 2024; India's share to rise by 4.6 pc: Report

India's fossil fuel emissions are projected to rise by 4.6 per cent in 2024, while China could see a marginal rise of 0.2 per cent, according to new research by a group of international scientists.

The report, unveiled during the UN climate conference or COP29 in Azerbaijan's Baku on Wednesday, stated that global carbon emissions from fossil fuels could reach 37.4 billion tonnes, an increase of 0.8 per cent from 2023 levels.

Atmospheric CO2 levels are projected to reach 422.5 parts per million in 2024, which is set to become the warmest year on record. This is 2.8 parts per million higher than in 2023 and 52 per cent above pre-industrial levels.

"The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly dramatic, yet we still see no sign that burning of fossil fuels has peaked," said Professor Pierre Friedlingstein of Exeter's Global Systems Institute, who led the study.

According to a UN report released last month, India's greenhouse gas emissions surged by 6.1 per cent in 2023, contributing to 8 per cent of the global total.

However, the country's historical contribution to global CO2 emissions stands at only 3 per cent.

India's per capita emissions remain low at 2.9 tons of CO2 equivalent (tCO2e), far below the global average of 6.6 tCO2e.

In the report released during today's COP29 discussions, the team of scientists, called the 'Global Carbon Project', said China's emissions, which make up 32 per cent of the global total, are likely to increase slightly by 0.2 per cent, though there is a chance they could decline.

Emissions from the United States and the European Union, which contribute 13 per cent and 7 per cent of the global total, are both set to decline, with drops of 0.6 per cent for the US and 3.8 per cent for the EU.

For the fossil fuel emissions in India, which make up 8 per cent of the global total, the team forecast a 4.6 per cent spike.

Emissions from the rest of the world, which together account for 38 per cent of global emissions, could see a rise of 1.1 per cent, according to the report titled 'Global Carbon Budget 2024'.

The researchers said that in 2024, coal emissions will likely increase by 0.2 per cent, oil by 0.9 per cent, and gas by 2.4 per cent, globally.

Atmospheric CO2 levels are projected to reach 422.5 parts per million in 2024, which is set to become the warmest year on record ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

Coal, oil, and gas contribute 41 per cent, 32 per cent, and 21 per cent of global fossil CO2 emissions, respectively. However, given the uncertainty in projections, it remains possible that coal emissions could decline in 2024, they said.

The report also pointed out that emissions from international aviation and shipping, which account for 3 per cent of global emissions and are tracked separately from national or regional totals, are expected to rise by 7.8 per cent in 2024. However, these emissions will still be 3.5 per cent below the 2019 pre-pandemic levels.

Globally, emissions from land-use changes, like deforestation, have dropped by 20 per cent over the past decade but are expected to rise in 2024. Permanent CO2 removal through reforestation and new forest planting now offsets about half of the emissions from permanent deforestation, they added.

Technology-based CO2 removal accounts for only a tiny fraction -- around one-millionth -- of CO2 emissions from fossil fuels.

The report said that emissions from fires in 2024 have been above the average since the beginning of the satellite record in 2003, particularly due to the extreme 2023 wildfire season in Canada (which continued into 2024) and severe drought in Brazil.

Land and ocean carbon sinks continued to absorb around half of the total carbon emissions, despite being negatively affected by climate change.

Professor Corinne Le Quéré, Royal Society Research Professor at the University of East Anglia's School of Environmental Sciences, said, "Despite another rise in global emissions this year, the latest data shows evidence of widespread climate action, with the growing penetration of renewables and electric cars displacing fossil fuels, and decreasing deforestation emissions in the past decades confirmed for the first time."

Dr Glen Peters, of the CICERO Center for International Climate Research in Oslo, noted that there are many signs of positive progress at the country level and a sense that a peak in global fossil CO2 emissions is imminent, but the global peak remains elusive.

—PTI

MUSK & VIVEK'S DOGE TO BITE GOVT'S 'WASTEFUL BUREAUCRACY'

They will head Dept of Govt Efficiency; Trump also appoints Fox News anchor as Defence Secy

WASHINGTON, 13 NOV

US President-elect Donald Trump announced on Wednesday that Tesla owner Elon Musk and Indian American entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy will lead the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, aimed at improving governance and curbing wasteful expenditures.

Trump has also given them a deadline of 4 July, 2026, the 250th Anniversary of The Declaration of Independence.

Ramaswamy, 37, is the first Indian American to have been tapped by Trump into his administration beginning 20 January next year.

"Together, these two wonderful Americans will pave the way for my administration to dismantle government bureaucracy, slash excess regulations, cut wasteful expenditures, and restructure federal agencies -- essential to the 'Save America' movement," he said.

He said this will become 'The Manhattan Project' of the current time.

The Manhattan Project was a top-secret government project that resulted in the atomic bomb that ended World War II.

Trump said DOGE will provide advice and guidance from outside of government, and will partner with White House and Office of Management and Budget "to drive large-scale structural reform, and create an entrepreneurial approach to the government never seen before."

This will send shock waves through the system, and anyone involved in government waste, which is a lot of people

—Elon Musk, Billionaire DOGE Head

NSA-pick Mike Waltz is an expert on the threats posed by China, Russia, Iran, and global terrorism

—Donald Trump, President-elect

We will not go gently. DOGE will begin crowdsourcing examples of government waste, fraud, & abuse.

—Vivek Ramaswamy, Billionaire DOGE Head

Trump also nominated Fox News host and Army veteran Pete Hegseth, 44, as his defence secretary and former Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe as the head the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Hegseth is an Army combat veteran who did tours in Guantanamo Bay, Iraq, and Afghanistan. For his actions on the battlefield, he was decorated with two Bronze stars, as well as a Combat Infantryman's badge. Praising Ratcliffe, Trump said, "From exposing fake Russian collusion to be a Clinton campaign operation, to catching the FBI's abuse of Civil Liberties at the FISA Court, John Ratcliffe has always been a warrior for Truth and Honesty with the American Public."

"When 51 intelligence officials were lying about Hunter Biden's laptop, there was one, John Ratcliffe, telling the truth to the American People," he added. *—PTI*

WHO LET THE DOGE OUT?

The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) owes its name to the 'Doge' meme. In 2013, two engineers created a 'meme coin' aka 'dog coin' to mock the cryptocurrency system. The payment system started as a joke but soon it saw more transactions than Bitcoin. Elon Musk caught on the trend and started posting quirky tweets promoting 'Dogecoin'. Dogecoin logo is its namesake meme called "Doge" which has the face of Kabosu, a Japanese Shiba Inu dog. Dogecoin on Wednesday surged over 10 per cent, riding high on the wave of Musk's latest role in US Cabinet.

OTHER APPOINTMENTS

1. **Ex- Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe:** CIA Head
2. **S Dakota Governor Kristi Noem:** Homeland Security Secretary
3. **Former House secy Bill McGinley:** White House Counsel
4. **Businessman Steven Witkoff:** Special Envoy to Middle East
5. **Former Arkansas guv Mike Huckabe:** Ambassador to Israel

COP29 Baku Azerbaijan

WORLD LEADERS ADDRESS CLIMATE CRISIS AT COP29

BAKU, 13 NOV

When more than two dozen world leaders deliver remarks at the United Nations' annual climate conference on Wednesday, many are likely to detail their nations' firsthand experience with the catastrophic weather that has come with climate change.

That could include Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, whose nation has seen deadly flooding this year from monsoon rains that scientists say have become heavier with climate change. Just two years ago, more than 1,700 people died in widespread flooding. Pakistan has also suffered from dangerous heat, with thousands of people hospitalised with heatstroke this spring as temperatures soared to 47 degrees Celsius.

Also on the list of speakers Wednesday is Bahamas Prime Minister Philip Edward Davis. Like many other countries in the Global South, the Bahamas has piled up debt from warming-connected weather disasters it did little to cause, including Hurricanes Dorian in 2019 and Matthew in 2016. Leaders have been seeking help and money from the Global North and oil companies. Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis is also on the list. Along with the rest of southern Europe, his nation this summer was hammered by successive heat waves after three years of below-average rainfall. *—PTI*

Iran publicly executes serial rapist

TEHRAN, 13 NOV

An Iranian man convicted of raping dozens of women over the past two decades has been executed in public, the country's state media reported on Wednesday. The state-owned IRAN newspaper said Mohammad Ali Salamat was hanged after Iran's Supreme Court confirmed his death sentence earlier in October. He was put to death at dawn Tuesday in a cemetery in the western city of Hamedan. Some 200 women had accused Salamat, a 43-year-old who ran a pharmacy and a gym in the city, of rape. He is said to have committed the crimes over the past 20 years. *—PTI*

Japan disqualifies reactor under Fukushima rules

TOKYO, 13 NOV

Japan's nuclear watchdog on Wednesday formally disqualified a reactor in the country's north-central region for a restart, the first rejection under safety standards that were reinforced after the 2011 Fukushima disaster. The decision is a setback for Japan as it seeks to accelerate reactor restarts to maximise nuclear power. The Nuclear Regulation Authority at a regular meeting Wednesday announced the Tsuruga No 2 reactor is "unfit" as its operator failed to address safety risks stemming from possible active faults underneath it.

Neom boss departs as Saudi scales back mega-projects

RIYADH, 13 NOV

The Chief Executive of Saudi Arabia's futuristic city, Neom, has left his role, along with several other executives on Tuesday. Nadhmi al-Nasr, who has managed Neom's construction since 2018, departed from his post in recent days, leaving while the project is plagued with uncertainty. Nasr earned a chilling reputation managing Neom. He bragged that he drove everyone "like a slave", adding, "When they drop dead, I celebrate."The kingdom has had to scale back Neom, originally billed as a $1.5 trillion megacity project, which organisers claim will eventually be 33 times the size of New York City and include a 170km straight-line city known as "The Line". Instead of 1.5 million living in the city by 2030, Saudi now anticipate 3,00,000 residents. *—Agencies*

Lebanese Red Cross volunteers search for victims at a house hit in an Israeli airstrike in Baalchmay village east of Beirut **PHOTO: PTI**

Israeli strikes kill 46 in Gaza, 33 in Lebanon

DEIR AL-BALAH, 13 NOV

Israeli airstrikes killed at least 46 people in the Gaza Strip in the past 24 hours, including 11 at a makeshift cafeteria in an Israeli-declared humanitarian zone, medics said. In Lebanon, warplanes struck Beirut's southern suburbs and killed 33 people elsewhere in the country on Tuesday.

The latest bombardment came as the United States said it would not reduce its military support for Israel after a deadline passed for allowing more humanitarian aid into Gaza. The State Department cited some progress, even as international aid groups said Israel had failed to meet the US demands.

In Lebanon, large explosions shook Beirut's southern suburbs — an area known as Dahiyeh, where Hezbollah has a significant presence — soon after the Israeli military issued evacuation warnings for 11 houses there.

There was no immediate word on casualties. The Israeli military said it targeted Hezbollah infrastructure, including command centers and weapons production sites. *—PTI*

Houthis attack US warships

Washington, 13 Nov

US warships came under sustained missile and drone attack from Houthi fighters as they sailed off the coast of Yemen, the Pentagon has confirmed, with the armed group claiming it attacked the US jet Abraham Lincoln & two US destroyers. *—Courtesy, Al Jazeera*

RUSSIA STRIKES KYIV WITH DRONES

KYIV, 13 NOV

Russia struck Kyiv with a sophisticated missile and drone attack for the first time in 73 days on Wednesday morning and damage is still being assessed, a top official in the Ukrainian capital said.

Air raid warnings blared for hours. Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv City military administration, said defence forces destroyed several cruise and ballistic missiles and up to a dozen drones.

He said damage was still being assessed. In the past, such combined attacks aimed to overwhelm air defences and cause maximum damage. A 48-year-old man suffered head injuries in the Brovary district of Kyiv. *—PTI*

Xi to open $1.3B Peru port amid US tensions

LIMA, 13 NOV

Chinese leader Xi Jinping is headed to Peru on Wednesday for a summit of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) organisation leaders overshadowed by fears of renewed global trade tensions under Donald Trump.

Xi will join leaders from the United States and other Asia-Pacific nations in the Peruvian capital Lima for the APEC gathering, after which he will go to Brazil.

Xi's first order of business in Peru is inaugurating a $1.3 billion megaport that will put China's regional influence on stark display. Total investment is expected to top $3.5 billion over the next decade.

Sitting 60km northeast of Lima, the Chancay megaport — once a serene fishing village — is perhaps the clearest sign of Latin America's reorientation. The Chinese shipping and logistics giant Cosco holds a 60 per cent stake in the project it developed with Peruvian partner, Volcan.

"With this port, we're looking at the entire Pacific coast, from the United States and Canada all the way to Chile," Peruvian Foreign Minister Elmer Schialer told The Associated Press in his office on Monday. "The shipping business is being transformed."

China's trade with the region ballooned 35-fold from 2000 to 2022, reaching nearly $500 billion, according to data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Most of the region's exports came from South America, and were concentrated in five products: soybeans, copper and iron ore, oil and copper cathodes. *—PTI*

China holds drills at disputed Scarborough Shoal

Beijing, 13 Nov

China held sea and air combat drills Wednesday at the disputed Scarborough Shoal, an area of reefs and rocks the Philippines also claims in the South China Sea. On Sunday, China published new baselines for the shoal including geographic coordinates. A nation's territorial waters and exclusive economic zone are typically defined as the distance from the baselines. China seized the shoal, which lies west of the main Philippine island of Luzon, in 2012 and has since restricted access to Filipino fishermen there. A 2016 ruling by an international arbitration court found that most Chinese claims in the South China Sea were invalid but Beijing refuses to abide by it.

China's second fifth-generation stealth fighter, the Shenyang J-35, made its debut at the Zhuhai Air Show, making China as the only country after the US with multiple fifth-generation jets. **PHOTO: X@IIAMGURI9**

VOLCANIC TROUBLES

Several international airlines, including Air India and Indigo, cancelled flights to and from Bali, Indonesia, on Wednesday due to the ongoing eruption of Mount Lewotobi Laki Laki. The 1,584m volcano unleashed ash plumes at least 17 times, with the largest reaching a height of 9km. As a result, at least 84 flights were disrupted, leaving many travellers stranded at airports **PHOTO: X**

US PROHIBITS AIRLINES FROM FLYING TO HAITI

PORT-AU-PRINCE, 13 NOV

Federal Aviation Administration announced on Tuesday that it will prohibit US airlines from flying to Haiti for 30 days after gangs shot two planes and the United Nations will temporarily suspend flights to Port-au-Prince, limiting humanitarian aid coming into the country.

The shootings were part of a wave of violence that erupted as the country plagued by gang violence swore in its new prime minister after a politically tumultuous process. The Port-au-Prince airport will remain closed until 18 November. Port-au-Prince is devastated as gangs choke the life out of the capital have pushed Haiti to the brink of famine. *—PTI*

PREZ DISSANAYAKE'S TEST

17M to vote in Lanka's parliamentary polls

COLOMBO, 13 NOV

Sri Lanka is set to hold its parliamentary election on Thursday with all arrangements in place to ensure a fair and transparent process, a top election commission official has said.

Voting will take place at over 13,314 polling stations across the country, from 7am to 4pm on Thursday.

Director General of the Elections Commission Saman Sri Ratnayaka on Tuesday said that all ballot boxes and other equipment needed at the polling stations would be dispatched on Wednesday. Over 17 million voters from the island's 21 million population are eligible to vote. 225 members would be elected from voting based on proportional representation.

The election would be the first major test of the popularity of the ruling party, National People's Power-led by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake.

Having failed to secure 50 per cent of the vote at the 21 September presidential election, Dissanayake was pleading for a stronger Parliament with well over the simple majority of 113 seats in order to implement his anti-corruption accountability reformist programme. Ranil Wickremesinghe, the outgoing president who lost to Dissanayake in last month's presidential election, is not contesting a parliamentary election for the first time since 1977.

The Rajapaksa brothers - Mahinda, Gotabaya, Chamal and Basil - will not contest the parliamentary election after decades-long representation. *—PTI*

PENATGON SECRET LEAKER TEIXEIRA GETS 15 YEARS IN JAIL

BOSTON, 13 NOV

A federal judge on Tuesday sentenced a Massachusetts Air National Guard member to 15 years in prison after he pleaded guilty to leaking highly classified military documents about the war in Ukraine.

Jack Teixeira pleaded guilty earlier this year to six counts of wilful retention and transmission of national defence information under the Espionage Act following his arrest last year in the most consequential national security case in years.

The 22-year-old admitted that he illegally collected some of the nation's most sensitive secrets and shared them on Discord. The leak exposed to the world unvarnished secret assessments of Russia's war in Ukraine, including information about troop movements in Ukraine, and the provision of supplies and equipment to Ukrainian troops. Teixeira also admitted posting information about a US adversary's plans to harm US forces. *—PTI*

BITS Pilani honours Micron CEO with Honorary PhD

BENGALURU, 12 NOV

BITS Pilani awarded an honorary PhD to Sanjay Mehrotra, President and CEO of Micron Technology, at its annual convocation on 10 November, recognising his 40-year contribution to semiconductor technology. Prof Ramgopal Rao, Vice Chancellor of BITS Pilani, highlighted Mehrotra's societal impact. Mehrotra, who began his undergraduate studies at BITS Pilani before transitioning to UC Berkeley, expressed gratitude for the institution's role in his career. Leading a global team of 48,000, he emphasised his commitment to fostering innovation. Celebrating its Diamond Jubilee, BITS Pilani - established in 1964 - is renowned for academic excellence and transformative impact. *—Salar News*

First turkey shipment leaves US for Indian market

WASHINGTON, 13 NOV

The first shipment of American Turkey products for India left on Tuesday, over a year after India agreed to the American request to reduce high tariffs on US turkey products. US Senator from Virginia Mark Warner, who is also co-chair of the Senate India Caucus, said this marks a historic milestone in international trade, expanding the reach of American turkey products in global markets, and opening new doors for US turkey producers. "This shipment is a tremendous opportunity for Virginia's poultry producers and a huge step forward for US-India trade...As co-chair of the Senate India Caucus, I look forward to the ongoing cooperation and to seeing a wealth of new opportunities open up for Virginia's poultry producers," Warner said. *—PTI*

Google grants $1M to Indian non-profit

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Google.org, the philanthropic arm of the tech giant, has awarded a USD 1 million grant to Mumbai-based non-profit organisation Karya to boost upskilling of low-income communities. The grant will support Karya's ongoing efforts to help community members access AI-related economic opportunities and complete complex, employment-linked digital tasks via their smartphones, ranging from annotating data to providing feedback that improves the performance of local language AI models. Karya will use the grant to create a digital skilling pathway and translate it into 10 major Indic languages to support India's AI-ready workforce. It will develop a multilingual chatbot using Generative AI for real-time support for its app and web-based work platforms, enhancing access to AI-related tasks. *—PTI*

E-commerce AI startup BiteSpeed raises $3.5M

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

E-commerce AI startup BiteSpeed has raised USD 3.5 million in a funding round led by Peak XV's Surge, with participation from Whiteboard Capital, Gaurav Munjal (Unacademy CEO), Aakash Anand (Bella Vita CEO), and Dhruv Vohra (META APAC Head), amongst others. With the fresh capital, BiteSpeed said it plans to accelerate its hiring efforts across marketing, sales, and technical departments to support its global expansion. Key growth regions include North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, it said. The company also aims to deepen its research and development efforts, particularly in generative AI, to further enhance its suite of products for e-commerce brands. *—PTI*

Swiggy shares surge nearly 8% in market debut

500 staffers turn 'crorepatis' as firm unlocks Rs 9K cr ESOPs

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Shares of food delivery and quick-commerce major Swiggy listed with a premium of nearly 8 per cent against the issue price of Rs 390 on Wednesday.

The stock listed at Rs 412, reflecting a jump of 5.64 per cent from the issue price on the BSE. Later, it surged 7.67 per cent to Rs 419.95. At the NSE, shares of the firm made the market debut at Rs 420, a jump of 7.69 per cent. The company's market valuation stood at Rs 89,549.08 crore during the early trade.

The Rs 11,327-crore initial public offer (IPO) of Swiggy got fully subscribed on the final day of the share sale on Friday, ending with 3.59 times subscription. The initial share sale had a price range of Rs 371–390 a share.

The company's IPO had a fresh issue of shares worth Rs 4,499 crore, along with an Offer-For-Sale (OFS) of Rs 6,828 crore.

Swiggy CEO Sriharsha Majety, NSE MD Ashishkumar Chauhan with executives at Swiggy bell ringing listing ceremony on Wednesday *PHOTO: PTI*

Swiggy said it is expecting "very solid" growth in the next three to five years and plans to expand its geographical footprint and stores network for Instamart business. The company also said it has doubled the categories for quick commerce in the last 12 months.

"We are expecting very solid growth for the next 3-5 years. We are expanding our geographical footprint, stores network for Instamart business," Swiggy CEO Sriharsha Majety said.

The company's much-anticipated stock market debut on Wednesday also catapulted over 500 current and former employees to the "crorepati" club, with the food delivery and quick commerce major's listing poised to unlock Rs 9,000 crore in ESOPs for 5,000 staffers, people aware of the details said.

"The total Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP) pool is worth Rs 9,000 crore, with 5,000 past as well as present employees holding them. At the upper price range of the initial share price (Rs 390), 500 employees out of the 5,000 are set to become crorepatis," a person in the know shared the details requesting anonymity.

The company plans to utilise proceeds from the fresh issue for investing in technology and cloud infrastructure, brand marketing and business promotion and debt payment. *—PTI*

RETAIL INFLATION SOARS

Investors poorer by ₹13L cr in 2 days

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

PHOTO: PTI

Equity investors suffered an erosion of Rs 13 lakh crore in market valuation in two days of crash in the BSE benchmark Sensex which lost over 2 per cent during this period.

Retail inflation soaring to a 14-month high of 6.21 per cent in October, unabated foreign fund outflows and muted quarterly earnings are the major reasons behind the heavy correction in the markets, traders said.

The BSE benchmark tanked 1,805.2 points or 2.27 per cent in two days. On Wednesday, it slumped 984.23 points or 1.25 per cent to settle at 77,690.95.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies eroded by Rs 13,07,898.47 crore to Rs 4,29,46,189.52 crore (USD 5.09 trillion) in two days.

Retail inflation breached the Reserve Bank's upper tolerance level, soaring to a 14-month high of 6.21 per cent in October mainly on account of rising food prices.

With inflation once again rising sharply and breaching above the RBI's comfort level, receding hopes of any major rate cuts in the near future by the central bank put the markets into a tizzy.

From the 30-share Sensex pack, Tata Steel, Mahindra & Mahindra, Adani Ports, State Bank of India, JSW Steel, HDFC Bank, IndusInd Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Reliance Industries and Bajaj Finserv were the biggest laggards.

NTPC, Tata Motors and Infosys were the gainers.

All sectoral indices ended lower. Realty tumbled 3.23 per cent, industrials (2.95 per cent), capital goods (2.72 per cent), services (2.54 per cent).

A total of 3,299 stocks declined while 670 advanced and 98 remained unchanged on the BSE. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Reliance Power posts ₹ 2,878 cr Q2 net profit

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Reliance Power has posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 2,878.15 crore in the July–September quarter of this financial year. The company had reported a net loss of Rs 237.76 crore in the year-ago period.

The total income of the company dipped to Rs 1,962.77 crore in the quarter under review, from Rs 2,116.37 crore in the same period a year ago. The company has gained Rs 3,230.42 crore on deconsolidation of a subsidiary, the company said in a regulatory filing on Tuesday.

During the July–September quarter, Reliance Power has settled Rs 3,872 crore guarantor obligations for its subsidiary Vidarbha Industries Power Ltd (VIPL).

"... The entire obligations of Reliance Power as a guarantor on behalf of VIPL stands fully settled resulting in the release and discharge of corporate guarantee, undertakings and all obligations and claims thereunder in relation to the outstanding debt of VIPL amounting to Rs 3,87,204 lakh," the filing said. *—PTI*

Kharif crop inflow may lower onion prices as rate hits Rs 80

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Onion prices are expected to further cool down in the coming days as the arrival of fresh kharif crop has begun, a senior consumer affairs ministry official said on Wednesday.

Currently, the average all-India retail price of onion is ruling at Rs 54 per kg and the prices have declined in the past one month after the government's subsidised sale of onion in key consuming centres. However, prices rose to Rs 80 per kilo in New Delhi and Mumbai.

The government is disposing of the buffer stock onion in the retail market at a subsidised rate of Rs 35 per kg in Delhi-NCR and other cities to provide relief to consumers from high prices.

The government has a buffer stock of 4.5 lakh tonne of onion, of which 1.5 lakh tonne has been disposed till date.

According to the ministry official, the buffer stock onion is being transported to key consuming centres through railways for the first time and is helping boost the supplies.

"We will continue with the bulk rail transportation of buffer onion till we exhaust with the stock and prices stabalise," the official said.

Labourers carry sacks of onions, at the Azadpur Mandi in New Delhi, Wednesday. Onion prices rose to Rs 80 per kilo in Delhi *PHOTO: PTI*

About 4,850 tonne of onion has been supplied through rail rakes in the last few weeks to Delhi, Chennai, and Guhawati. A maximum of 3,170 tonne onion was transported to the price-sensitive Delhi market.

"Another rake of Rs 730 tonne by cooperative Nafed is expected to reach Delhi tomorrow," the official said noting this should further boost the availability and ease prices.

There was sudden pressure on onion prices in the last two days as mandis were closed and labourers were on leave due to festival season, the official said adding that the situation, however, has started improving now. *—PTI*

Patent office warns against conmen

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Indian patent office has cautioned people against fraudsters who are collecting data and status of IP (intellectual property) applications from the website and seeking money to facilitate those applications.

"It is, therefore, advised to all the stakeholders who are applying or may have applied for any type of IP applications (i.e. Patents, Designs, Trade Marks, GIs (geographical indications), Designs or Copyright) that they should not fall prey to such false claims and pay any money against these claims," the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trademarks said.

It said that these applications are processed strictly as per provisions of law and this office has zero tolerance for any such unethical practices. In case such claims are made to any stakeholder, the same may also be brought to the attention of this office. *—PTI*

Govt raps false coaching centres ads

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

The Centre on Wednesday released new guidelines to regulate misleading advertisements by coaching institutes, prohibiting false claims like 100 per cent selection or 100 per cent job security.

The final guidelines, drafted by the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), come in the wake of several complaints on the National Consumer Helpline. The CCPA has issued 54 notices and imposed penalties of about Rs 54.60 lakh till date.

"We have seen coaching centres deliberately concealing information from prospective students. Therefore, we have come out with the guidelines to provide guidance to people involved in the coaching industry," said Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare.

PHOTO: X

The government is not against the coaching centres, but the quality of advertisements should not undermine the consumer rights, she said.

Under the new guidelines, coaching centres are prohibited from making false claims regarding courses offered and duration, faculty credentials, fee structure and refund policies, selection rates and exam rankings and guaranteed job security or salary increases.

The guidelines define "coaching" to include academic support, education, guidance, study programmes and tuition, but exclude counselling, sports and creative activities.

Coaching centres cannot use names, photographs or testimonials of successful candidates without written consent obtained after selection. They must display disclaimers prominently and disclose important information about courses. *—PTI*

FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES

'Mission Kamyab' to help Guj students crack JEE, NEET

SURAT, 13 NOV

De Mentoren Institution, in collaboration with Surat-based GD Goenka International School, has launched Mission Kamyab, an innovative programme to help students preparing for the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) and National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET).

Raghuram Acharya, the project head of Mission Kamyab, said the initiative would deliver top-tier academic training, provide top 40 students with full scholarships and give a complete refund of fees to students who secure seats in IIT or AIIMS.

The programme combines rigorous coaching with the school's academic curriculum, fostering a comprehensive learning experience that prepares students not only for exams but for lifelong growth, Acharya said. *—PTI*

Gold slips ₹50 to ₹77,750 per 10 gm; silver climbs again

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Gold prices slipped Rs 50 to a four-week low of Rs 77,750 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday amid firm global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

On Tuesday, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 77,800 per 10 grams.

However, silver prices rebounded after two days of straight fall by climbing Rs 1,200 to Rs 92,500 per kg against the previous close of Rs 91,300 per kg.

Price of gold of 99.5 per cent purity fell Rs 50 to Rs 77,350 per 10 grams. The yellow metal had finished lower at Rs 77,400 per kg on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, in futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery rose Rs 204, or 0.27 per cent, to trade at Rs 75,105 per 10 grams. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

THINKTANK WARNS

'Musk's Starlink can pose security risk'

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Amid talk of Elon Musk's Starlink seeking to offer satellite broadband internet service in India, think tank Kutniti Foundation has highlighted in a report that the tech giant's deep ties with US intelligence and military agencies that could impede national interests.

Calling Starlink "a wolf in sheep's clothing", the foundation said Starlink is a dual-use technology with "its biggest customer and promoter being the American government intelligence and military."

While legacy mobile phone service providers use telecom towers for offering voice and internet services, satellite communication or satcom involves using a constellation of satellites for offering the same. However, there are concerns that the control of those satellites lies outside the country.

"Starlink constellation of satellites is a new form of internet service providers across the world, unbound by geographic demarcations and natural boundaries. A direct access to every citizen in the world, with no governance structure in between the user and the American one," Kutniti said.

PHOTO: X

Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia had stated that Starlink was yet to comply with security norms, and a licence for satellite broadband services will be issued only after they meet all the requirements for services.

An email sent to Starlink seeking comments on Kutniti report remained unanswered.

Musk, whose space company SpaceX is said to be building a network of hundreds of spy satellites under a classified contract with a US intelligence agency, had clashed with the Biden administration over the use of Starlink satellite connectivity in Ukraine war.

Musk refused a Ukrainian request to activate his Starlink satellite network to aid an attack on Russia. Kutniti said they were part of the known intel-military-industrial complex of the USA and there were many that were kept behind covers. *—PTI*

Elon Musk's *PHOTO: X*

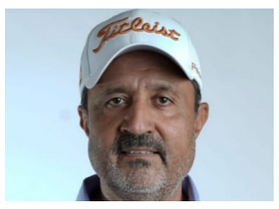


PHOTO: PTI

Amandeep Johl appointed CEO of PGTI

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

The Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) on Wednesday announced the appointment of Amandeep Johl as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) from January 2025. A respected name in Indian golf, Johl brings extensive experience to his new role. The appointment comes alongside another recent significant leadership addition, with the legendary cricketer Kapil Dev assuming the role of PGTI President in June this year. Johl replaces Uttam Singh Mundy, who has played a key role in the organization since its inception. Johl, who until recently was on the PGTI board, will take charge from 1 January. —*PTI*

Spain-Poland tie in Billie Jean Cup Finals postponed

MALAGA, 13 NOV

The first tie of the Billie Jean King Cup Finals between Spain and Poland was postponed on Wednesday because of a severe weather alert in the Malaga region. Organizers said the "decision has been made based on guidance from the relevant authorities to ensure the health and safety of all participants and attendees."The first-round tie will now be played on Friday when Germany will also face Britain. Two ties are scheduled for Thursday: Japan-Romania and Slovakia-United States.Both the Billie Jean King Cup Finals and the Davis Cup Finals are taking place in the southern Spanish city, with the men's competition beginning next week.—*PTI*

Ex RCB star Parthiv Patel joins Gujarat Titans

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Gujarat Titans have entrusted former India keeper-batter Parthiv Patel with the dual responsibility of serving as their assistant and batting coach in the upcoming IPL, the franchise said on Wednesday. Parthiv will perform the dual role in the support staff led by head coach Ashish Nehra. "The Gujarat Titans are pleased to announce the appointment of Parthiv Patel as their new assistant and batting coach. With a distinguished 17-year career as a former Indian wicket-keeper-batter, Parthiv brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the team," the franchise said in a statement. "As the Titans prepare for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) season, Parthiv's insights into batting techniques and strategies will play a crucial role in enhancing the players' skills. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Pak should stop playing cricket with India: Latif

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Former wicket-keeper batter Rashid Latif says if had the power he would not let Pakistan play against India in any tournament and also suggested that ICC should not grant the hosting rights of global events to both countries until they resolve their issues.The BCCI has refused to send its team to Pakistan for the upcoming Champions Trophy and there is speculation that the entire tournament could be moved out of the country.The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has written to the International Cricket Council (ICC) asking for written confirmation from the BCCI for India's inability to travel to Pakistan for the tournament.—*PTI*

BORDER-GAVASKAR TROPHY

Gambhir is a prickly character: Ponting

Kohli's poor form will be a concern

MELBOURNE,13 NOV

Responding to Gautam Gambhir's jibe at him, former Australia skipper Ricky Ponting on Wednesday said the India head coach was a "prickly character" and insisted that his comments on Virat Kohli should not be construed as a dig on the star batter, who himself would be worried about his prolonged lean patch.

Ponting, in an interview with ICC, had said that Kohli's poor form would be a concern and any other international player would have struggled to keep his spot in the Test side with just two hundred in five years. He though had also spoken highly of Kohli's ability to bounce back.

Gambhir, when asked about Ponting's comments, said the Australian legend needn't be concerned about Indian cricket. "I was surprised to read the reaction but knowing the coach, Gautam Gambhir ... he's quite a prickly character, so I'm not surprised it was him who said something back," Ponting told 7News when asked about Gambhir's comments. "If he comes my way, yeah. I don't expect him to. We have got quite a bit of history, against each other. I have coached him at Delhi Capitals and he is quite a prickly character," Ponting said in jest when the anchor asked if he would shake hands with Gambhir if they crossed paths. One of the greatest batters of his time, Ponting then explained what he meant and felt that things were taken out of context. —*PTI*

Former Australian skipper Ricky Ponting PHOTO: PTI

Indian batters 'can't stand up' to Aussie pacers: Haddin

Brad Haddin

Former captain Aaron Finch believes Rishabh Pant and Alex Carey will be crucial in determining the outcome of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, while retired wicketkeeper Brad Haddin predicts that Indian batters will struggle against the Australian pacers.Finch feels the two wicketkeepers have the ability to shift the momentum in their team's favor in the event of a top-order collapse."I think the key could be Alex Carey and Rishabh Pant. The two wicketkeepers are going to be so important," Finch said on 'Willow Talk Podcast' when asked where this series is going to be won or lost."A time or other in series the top order will get knocked over as both fast bowling attacks are so good and they will get on a roll. For me, it is that crucial role of Alex at number seven and Rishabh at number six likely." —*PTI*

Aishwary-Sanjeeta strike gold at World University Shooting

NEW DELHI, 13 NOV

Olympian Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Sanjeeta Das combined to give India a gold medal in the 10m air rifle mixed team event as the hosts claimed their third top-podium finish at the World University Shooting Championship here on Wednesday.

Aishwary, following the disappointment of finishing fifth in men's 10m air rifle and having to settle for silver in 50m rifle 3-positions, finally came up with a gold-winning effort, combining with Sanjeeta, to overcome a strong challenge from the South Korean pair of Kim Hyobeen and Lee Junhwan 17-15.

Aishwary Pratap

The Polish team of Julia Piotrowska and Maciej Kowalewicz defeated the Indian duo of Manini Kaushik and Umamahesh Maddineni 16-0 in the bronze-medal clash.

Sanjeeta (316.8) and Aishwary (316.2) had earlier aggregated 633.0 to top the qualification round and move into the final, where they faced Korea who was second with an aggregate of 631.7. The top two teams in the event fight for the gold, while the third and fourth-placed pair compete for the bronze.

Manini and Umamahesh were placed fourth at the end of the qualification round with an aggregate of 628.7 and faced third-placed Poland, who totaled 629.8. —*PTI*

ACT WOMEN'S HOCKEY

INDIA LOOK TO WORK ON FINER POINTS AGAINST THAILAND

RAJGIR, 13 NOV

Buoyed by back-to-back victories in as many games, hosts India will look to work on the finer points of the game to thrash minnows Thailand in the women's Asian Champions Trophy here on Thursday.

Both India and reigning Olympic silver medallist China are unbeaten so far from two matches but the hosts have an inferior goal difference. China is atop the points table with a goal difference of 20, while India has a goal difference of five and a handsome victory on Thursday will only help their cause ahead of the final two round-robin matches against China and Japan.

Japan is placed third in the points table ahead of Korea. The top four sides from the round-robin stage will qualify for the semifinals of the six-team continental tournament.

In both the matches India created plenty of scoring chances but failed to score the amount of goals they would have liked. While India defeated Malaysia 4-0 in their tournament opener, they scored a late goal to eke out a narrow 3-2 win over South Korea.

The Indian players were guilty of rushing and faltered in choices once inside the opposition circle, a fact which chief coach Harendra Singh admitted.

"...we could have scored more goals. We were guilty of rushing and did not look for the right choices," Harendra said after Tuesday's match.

"We will watch clippings of the match and analyze where we went wrong and work on the finer points," he added. —*PTI*

India women's hockey team in action PHOTO: ANI

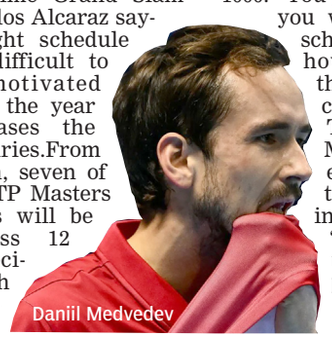
Medvedev calls for overhaul of ATP Tour calendar

PARIS, 13 NOV

World number four Daniil Medvedev said the ATP Tour calendar needs to be refocused around the Grand Slams and Masters 1000 events with the lower-tier ATP 250 tournaments moved to an optional slot later in the year.

Several players have voiced concerns over the calendar, with four-time Grand Slam winner Carlos Alcaraz saying the tight schedule makes it difficult to stay motivated throughout the year and increases the risk of injuries.From next season, seven of the nine ATP Masters 1000 events will be held across 12 days, a decision which was criticised by Stefanos Tsitsipas last week.

"This year I only tried to play big tournaments," Medvedev told reporters after his win over Alex De Minaur at the ATP Finals on Tuesday."I think there should be bigger, important tournaments, which should be like, 'Okay, these are the tournaments where we define who is going to be top 10, like Masters 1000.''"You play good in them, you will be there. The schedule should somehow be around them."Reuters has contacted the ATP Tour for comment. Medvedev suggested staging the top tournaments earlier in the year, adding: "Then you put all the 250s after for people that want to continue playing. —*AP*



Daniil Medvedev

NEW ZEALAND VS SRI LANKA

New Zealand's captain Mitchell Santner, left, and Sri Lanka's captain Charith Asalanka pose with the winners' trophy before the start of the first ODI cricket match PHOTO: PTI

Mehendale, Herlekar get top billing in M'rashtra tourney

MUMBAI, 13 NOV

Tanay Mehendale and Shivani Herlekar have been given top billing in men's and women's singles categories for the Maharashtra State Open Badminton Tournament starting here on Thursday.

In the men's category, Shvetank Karnik is seeded second while Yash Tiwari and Soham Phatak are seeded third and fourth respectively.

In the women's competition, Shraddha Hakke is seeded second followed by Manasvi Vaidya as third seed and Netra Jhalani as fourth seed.

The tournament is organized by the Greater Mumbai Badminton Association (GMBA) under the auspices of the Maharashtra Badminton Association (MBA) along with Willingdon Sports Club.

Girls' singles U17: 1. Shravni Patil, 2. Prisha Shah, 3. Netra Jhalani, 4. Khushi Pahwa. Boys' singles U-17: 1. Tanay Mehendale, 2. Harshit Mahimkar, 3. Ishan Wankhede, 4. Nidhish More. Women's singles: 1. Shivani Herlekar, 2. Shraddha Hakke, 3. Manasvi Vaidya, 4. Netra Jhalani.—*PTI*

Shami makes a quiet comeback

INDORE, 13 NOV

India pacer Mohammed Shami returned wicket-less from his 10 overs in a subdued comeback to competitive cricket after 360 days as Bengal struggled in their Ranji Trophy Group C game against Madhya Pradesh here on Wednesday.

Electing to field first, MP were 103/1 at stumps after bowling out Bengal for 228 in their first innings. The visitors need an outright win to keep their slim quarterfinal hopes alive.

Bengal's attack is depleted by injuries to Ishan Porel and Rishav Vivek, while Mukesh Kumar and Akash Deep are on national duty. All eyes are now on Shami to not only prove his fitness but also rejuvenate his state team's campaign.

Bowling on the Holkar Stadium green top, the 34-year-old Shami, who was sidelined with an Achilles tendon injury on his left leg for which he underwent surgery, returned figures of 10-1-34-0.

Shami, who was last seen in action in India's ODI World Cup final against Australia in Ahmedabad on November 19 last year, bowled four overs in the first spell, giving away 16 runs. He conceded three fours and bowled 17 dot balls in that spell. —*PTI*

Bengal's Mohammed Shami reacts after bowling a delivery on the first day of a Ranji Trophy cricket match between Madhya Pradesh and Bengal PHOTO: PTI

Arsenal's Frida Leonhardsen Maanum PHOTO: X

Barcelona and Arsenal win big

LONDON, 13 NOV

Manchester City and Bayern Munich stayed perfect in the Women's Champions League halfway through the group stage on Tuesday, while two-time defending champion Barcelona and Arsenal recorded big wins.

City leads Group D with nine points after the English league leader beat Hammarby 2-0 at home. Barcelona is second, trailing by three points, followed by Hammarby on three and St. Pölten without a point.

Barcelona earlier thrashed St. Pölten 7-0. Claudia Pina led the demolition with two goals. It followed another massive win for Barcelona, 9-0 over Hammarby in the previous round.

Arsenal is recovering from a poor start to the season, scoring four goals in the second straight game in the competition as it won 4-0 at Juventus.

The Gunners are second in Group C with six points, three behind leader Bayern, which eased past pointless newcomer Vålerenga 3-0. Juventus has three points. It took Barcelona 32 minutes to break the deadlockOna Batlle crossed from the left for Ewa Pajor to net the opener from close range. Then another four goals came within seven minutes as Barcelona was rewarded for its dominance. —*PTI*

AL-HILAL EXIT?

Pelé's former club Santos eyes Neymar return

SAO PAULO, 13 NOV

Santos secured its return to the top tier of Brazilian soccer next year when it hopes that star striker Neymar will be back at the club which achieved a global following with Pelé.

Santos, which was relegated in 2023 for the first time in its history almost a year after the death of all-time great Pelé, secured its place in Brazil's Serie A with a 2-0 win at Coritiba on Monday night. Wendel opened the scoring in the 20th minute and Romulo Otero added a second in the 41st.

Serie B leader Santos has 68 points in 36 matches, guaranteeing one of the four promotion places.

Star striker Neymar will be back at the club- PHOTO: X

Santos president Marcelo Teixeira said in the early hours of Tuesday that he will wait for Neymar and his Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal to decide their future. The 32-year-old player is under contract until June.

In 2011, a teenage Neymar led Santos to their first Copa Libertadores title in 48 years. He left the club in 2013 for Barcelona.

"(We are) clear and objective, his father and his staff know it," Teixeira told reporters at the Vila Belmiro Stadium in Santos, outside Sao Paulo. "They know me, they know Santos. We have to wait because he has an active contract."

Teixeira added that Neymar will be welcome to the stadium on Sunday when Santos plays CRB. A win will secure the Serie B title for Santos.

"The box is available to him, as always. If he is in Brazil, he will be welcome," Teixeira said.

As he recovered from an ACL injury, Neymar repeatedly posted pictures and videos of himself watching Santos matches and speaking to team players. Al-Hilal said on Nov. 6 that the Brazilian is once again sidelined because of a muscular injury. —*PTI*

Bev Priestman fired as Canada women's soccer coach

TORONTO, 13 NOV

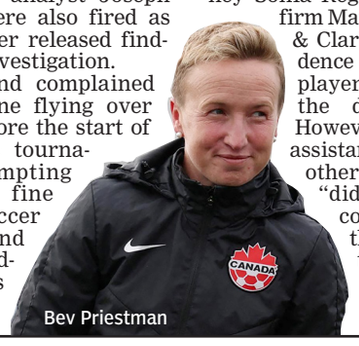
Canada women's coach Bev Priestman, suspended following a drone surveillance scandal at the Paris Olympics, was fired Tuesday following an independent review.

Assistant coach Jasmine Mander and analyst Joseph Lombardi were also fired as Canada Soccer released findings of the investigation.

New Zealand complained about a drone flying over practices before the start of the Olympic tournament, prompting FIFA to fine Canada Soccer $228,000 and strip six standings points from the team. Priestman, Mander, and Lombardi were all suspended by soccer's international governing body for a year.

Despite the penalty, Canada advanced to the group stage and lost to Germany on penalty kicks in the quarterfinals.

The investigation by attorney Sonia Regenbogen of the firm Mathews, Dinsdale & Clark found no evidence that Canadian players had viewed the drone footage. However, it found that assistant coaches and other support staff "did not feel they could challenge the authority of the head coach." —*PTI*



Bev Priestman